



Ottawa Valley Aquarium Society

Something Fishy Nov 2017

Vice-President's Message

The 2017-18 season is off to a great start. We had a wonderful turn out to the annual garage sale and opening event in September, and October's live food demo and our new Q&A session was a hit. October also brought us some extra excitement with OVAS on Rogers Cable.

We would like to welcome all the new members this year, and we hope that we see more coming in regularly. Of course, we are always happy to see the regulars at the meetings as well.

This year, for our livestock mini auction, the club will be sourcing some special stock. We have some plants and fish that are being brought in with the members in mind, and we hope that everyone can find something good.

We are all excited to have a OVAS sponsor several in class aquariums, under the direction of Errol (charlie) and Keith (Boxjockey). This is a great way for us to further promote the love of fish keeping and the hobby. In time this can also bring new members to the club, as students, their families and even teachers get into the hobby.

Jody McManus - Vice-President

2017-18 Meeting Dates

Sept 16 Oct 23 Nov 27

Jan 22 Feb 26 Mar 22

Apr 23 May 28

Welcome 2017-18 Exec

President	Errol Choo
Vice President	Jody McManus
Secretary	Sid Arnold
Treasurer	Mike McCarthy
Program Chair	Mike Gilbert
Auction Chair	Robert Hemp
Membership	Liam Epp
Sponsorship	Andre Martin
Online Presence	Matthew Timms
Webmaster	Th3budd

2017 Membership

Valid until Sept 2018

Adult \$20

Youth \$7

Family \$30

Breeder's Corner

We have had a few entries into our Breeder's award program in the last two months.

Keith – Zebra Danios (*danio rerio*) & Kribensis (*Pelvicachromis pulcher*)

Matthew - Bushynose plecos (*Ancistrus dolichopterus*)

Jody – Blue Rams (*Mikrogeophagus ramirezi*) and Red Breast Flag Cichlid (*Laetacara dorsigera*)

For more information on the Breeder's award program, or if you have fish you are breeding and you would like to register, contact Jody at ovasmail@yahoo.com



What is OVAS all about?

As we have quite a few new members, it is a great time to share some information about the goals of the club.

The Ottawa Valley Aquarium Society is a volunteer run non-profit organization with the following objectives.

To establish a local network of hobbyists allowing for the positive and amicable exchange of experiences, ideas, information and resources;

To promote local area interest in the hobby;

To provide resources and opportunities for both novice and experienced hobbyists to further their understanding and to encourage their study of aquatic life; and,

To raise awareness on the conservation of endangered species and preservation of aquatic environments.

In past years, we have donated to organizations promoting preservation, including the Stuart M. Grant Cichlid Conservation Fund, to install anti-netting devices in parts of the Lake Malawi National park.

Our monthly meetings are a great place to get to know fellow hobbyists and to learn about and share your interests.

Don't forget to keep an eye out for special events, like the plantaholics group and Montreal visits. These will be posted on the website, and everyone is welcome.

The club is only as good as it's members, and looking at our first couple meeting, it looks like it is going to be a fantastic year.

Two Lost Cichlids

Opening old fish books is kind of like looking back in time a little. I think back a time when I got them, pouring through them, studying and reading every page. Some fish, like killifish, were just dreams at the time. Others, were available in the “good” pet store's tanks. I remember reading the book and going to the store to see if they had a real rarity like *Badis badis* (the only *Badis* at the time), or dwarf cories. Of course there are those other fish, who were common at the time, in both literature, and in stores, but have since disappeared, rarely to be seen again. Two of these are the port acara and egyptian mouthbrooder. They were both considered to be very common in the hobby and for a long time, easily found.

So what happened to them? Why do we not see them anymore?

The port acara, *Cichlasoma portalegrense*, was once a common cichlid, originally imported to Germany in 1890, and then exported to the US from there in 1913. They became quite popular until WWII, at which time, due to German interests in Buenos Aires and Rio De Janiero, where they are found, commercial fish exports stopped. This lasted until the mid 1980s, and during this time, the captive lines died off.

After this, *C. bimaculatum* and other similar acaras were often imported into the country under the name of “port acara”. This has led to a lot of confusion, but it is believed that the true port acara probably didn't come back into the US until over 40 years after the war, and even then it was mostly just a contaminate in other fish shipments. This remains true even now.

This, to me, means that it is likely that I have never seen a true port acara, but rather one of the similar looking fish.



Okay, so that solves one mystery, now about how the other? What happened to the egyptian mouthbrooder?

The egyptian mouthbrooder, *Pseudocrenilabrus multicolor*, is a small 3.5” cichlid found in Kenya, Egypt, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda. First discovered in 1893 it is one of the oldest african cichlids in the hobby. Due to it's small size and ease of breeding it quickly gained popularity, and was common in the hobby.

There were two factors that played into their decline. There was some mix with another fish, the Nile Tilapia (*Tilapia nilotica*), who look very similar when young, and often got confused. This wouldn't have been an issue, but the nile tilapia can grow up to 20” and can be very aggressive.

While they have some blues, red and yellows, the egyptian mouthbrooders, overall subtle colouration, did not compare to some new arrivals, the Malawi cichlids. Active and easy to breed, they quickly overtook the little egyptian in popularity, and slowly it disappeared from stores.

Several brightly coloured relatives have surfaced in the hobby in the last couple of decades, but the classic rarely pops up. I did come across a tank with their name about a year ago, though

unfortunately, they were all sold out. It is good to see that there are still some out there, just not as many.

Like many other fish, the port acara and egyptian mouthbrooders have gotten rare in the hobby. Thankfully, for them, it is not habitat destruction or extinction that has caused it, and we can hope that in time, we will see these wonderful fish again in stores.



Natural nitrate reduction tip

One of the biggest issues in many aquariums is nitrates. These are one of the byproducts of fish waste breakdown, and almost every cycled tank will have some.

Typically, to get rid of them, we water change or add a chemical remover to our filter.

However, there is a natural source of nitrate removable, that is quick and easy. Plants in the aquarium are a fantastic way to eat up some of those excessive nitrates.

Do you need to have a fully planted tank to control them?

No, in fact you don't even need to plant the tank. If you take a plant like pothos and just put the roots in your filter, it can make a simple, natural nitrate removal system.

