

Finformation

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January 2004



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Next Meeting: January 30
Elections of Officers
and Board Members
(Plus raffle and auction!)

**CONTACT THE
NEWSLETTER**

Please send articles or comments to
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Or e-mail JGRACE@PITT.EDU

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PO Box 22452, Pittsburgh, PA
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**Back issues of *Finformation* are
available in full color online at**
gpasi.org/newsletter.html

NEWSLETTER ART

Cover art by Kathy Bintrim.

MEMBERSHIP

DUES are \$20 a year per family
or street address.
To become a member, write to us or
see Steve Gibbs at the next meeting.
Visit WWW.GPASI.ORG

General Meetings are held at the
Phipps Garden Center in Mellon
Park at the Corner of
5th and Shady Avenues.
DOORS OPEN AT 7 PM

Dates for general meetings and Board
of Directors Meetings for 2004 will
be announced soon.

Next General Meeting
Feb. 27

**February Board of Directors
Meeting:**
Feb. 9 at 7 pm
at Elmer's Aquarium in Monroeville

All members and suggestions for
discussion are welcome. Contact a
board member for meeting
confirmation.

Upcoming GPASI Events

January Meeting

On January 30, we will have a regular meeting at the Phipps Garden Center. We will hold elections for officers and board members. We will also have an auction and raffle, as usual. Remember that you have to be a member in order to vote, so be prepared to renew your GPASI membership at that meeting.

GPASI Annual Fish Show

Mark your calendars: On April 30, May 1, and May 2, GPASI will be holding our annual Fish Show at the Palace Inn in Monroeville.

You can sponsor a class for the show. Your \$25 will provide the cash prizes for the class you sponsor, and your name will be published in the show program and on-line. It's a great way to support the hobby. Look for the sign-up board at the meeting.

The Show Committee is meeting regularly. If you want to help with the show or if you have questions, please contact Show Chair Bill Sensor at (724) 845-7171.



**GPASI President Mike Solito greets
Grand Master Breeder Sallie Boggs at the Holiday Party.
For more party photos, see page 4.**

Photo Jane Swanson

The President's Choice Award

GPASI President Mike Solito awarded the first President's Choice Award at the Holiday Party. The award is designed to recognize outstanding contribution to the club by a volunteer. The first recipient of the award was Jim Davidson, GPASI Treasurer.

Jim has given a huge amount of time and energy to the club over the years. As treasurer, he is careful, attentive, and efficient. He handles the very complicated business of the club with enthusiasm and foresight, managing our interests with a precision that is awe-inspiring. Jim's kindness and sense of humor are well known to those of us who have worked with him at auctions and on the board of directors. He is also someone who is always there for us and who does what he says he's going to do: this reliability has made him a huge asset to the club.

From all of us at GPASI, Jim, thank you for everything you have done for the club. Your spirit of volunteerism has helped make GPASI what it is today.

Finformation Artist Retires

The image of rummy nose tetras and marble hatchetfish on this month's cover of *Finformation* is the last piece that artist Kathy Bintrim will be creating for the newsletter. She had originally signed on to do one year's worth of cover art and now that the year is up, she finds that her professional life is making increasing demands on her time.

Kathy has created some remarkable art during the past year and has brightened our days as we got to see some of our favorite fish drawn with great skill, knowledge, care, and affection. Many of you are aware of the fact that Kathy also donated her professional graphic design skills to the club as the designer of our posters and show materials (everything from nametags to the program brochure). Kathy was also an important voice on our Board of Directors for several years.

We all wish Kathy luck as she works on her jewelry business, In Leafy Shadows, and on all her other endeavors. We appreciate her sharing her vision and art with us this year and for being the driving force behind our advertising and image for the past several years.

Members Offer Aquarium Classes at CCAC

Steve and Debbie Pro are offering beginner's classes on both freshwater and saltwater aquariums at CCAC (Boyce Campus in Monroeville) this spring. If you have friends (ages 10 and up) who have been thinking about getting into the hobby but need some support, please let them know about these classes. Both classes will teach students how to set up and maintain aquariums. Parents must register with children who take the classes.

The freshwater class will take place on two Saturdays from 10 a.m. to noon starting Feb. 21. The cost of the class is \$35.

The saltwater class will take place on three Saturdays from 10 a.m. to noon starting March 6. The cost of the class is \$39.

Call CCAC at (412) 469-6200 with questions or contact Steve Pro at dspro@stargate.net.

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~ There can be no club without its members. If there is anything that you would like to do for GPASI, just let one of us know. We'd be happy to have you as part of the team. ~

The Holiday Party

The annual Holiday Party on January 11 was a huge success. More than 80 people attended. BAP Chair Chuck Bialon presented Breeder's Award Program awards to club members who had achieved BAP milestones. GPASI President Mike Solito awarded Treasurer Jim Davidson the President's Choice Award in recognition of the outstanding contributions Jim has made to the club in the past nine years.

There was great food. We had a wonderful raffle with lots of good fish, plants, and equipment. And the club provided door prizes for every family in attendance (supplies, fish food, and many different bags of fish—ranging from Endler's livebearers to various corys). Everyone left with a little something extra. Thanks to all the GPASI members who planned and worked to create a fun day for the club.



Photo Bill Shenefelt

John Lewis and Stacy Gatto running the raffle table. Many thanks to members who donated fish and supplies to the raffle. We made enough on the raffle to pay for the hall rental for the day.

In the background, you can see the sign-up board for sponsorships for the GPASI show this spring. One-third of the sponsorships for this year were snapped up at the holiday party! Look for the sign-up board at the next meeting.



Ross and Laura Cronkhite (L), Terrence Trasatti, and Taffy and Bill Shenefelt visiting at the start of the party.

Photo Bill Shenefelt

(Right) Linda and Ted Neill and their daughter Jessica enjoying the Holiday Party.



Photo Jane Swanson

(Below) GPASI members chatting with each other.



Photo Bill Shenefelt

GPASI Journal Classic

***Elassoma evergladei*: Dwarf Pygmy Sunfish Story by Sallie Boggs**

Editor's Note: This article, originally published in Fall 1985 by the GPASI Journal, is drawn from our growing on-line archive of articles from GPASI's past (visit articles.gpasi.org).

For several years I have wanted to obtain some *Elassoma evergladei* and made my desire known to friends in Madison, Wisconsin, where I spent ten delightful months on sabbatical leave. I had heard that these little fish, ranging in nature from North Carolina to Florida, were real gems in the aquarium. Much to my surprise and joy, Rick Ivak presented me with an adult pair as a going away present when I left Madison in November '84.

Small fish that mature at one inch to one and a half inches, the *E. evergladei* reportedly can survive temperatures from freezing to just under 80 degrees F. At spawning time, the male is a velvet black with numerous shining turquoise scales scattered in the black, and the female is golden to reddish with intermixed shining gold scales. When they are frightened,

both sexes can take on a drab, mottled color pattern that makes them almost invisible in a natural aquarium. Their "invisibility" is compounded by their habit of staying motionless at odd angles.

Although they undoubtedly would prefer an outdoor pond, they can live apparently happily in a small tank. Another Madison friend, Matt Hirvonen, had a pair that spawned in a five-gallon tank, so I placed mine in a "5" and added an overdose of live daphnia. This kept them fed and the tank clean while I finished packing up for a two-day car trip back to Pittsburgh.

When the car was stuffed to the gills with clothing, boxes, and fish tanks, I set off, the *E. evergladei* snug in their bags in a styrofoam box in the back of the car. As the trip progressed, temperatures dropped, and when we arrived in Pittsburgh the next day, I took the fish to the only place where I knew of an available tank, Ed Redgate's laboratory at the University of Pittsburgh. When I arrived with my chilly fish, Ed seemed unimpressed by the *evergladei*. Even I had to admit that they looked rather plain and somewhat shaken.

In order to make them feel at home, we set them up in a five-gallon tank on the window sill, with a three-inch-thick block of styrofoam to shield them from direct sun. The cold metal window sill would keep them cool.

The tank was decorated with floating plants and plants rooted in 1 to 2 inches of brown sand (fine gravel). A few chunks of petrified wood provided shelter, which they seemed to appreciate. There was no filtration, air, or heater provided. Livebearing snails were added to keep the sand clean, and ramshorn snails to keep down the algae and clean up excess food. The fish at first were seldom seen except at feeding time, but they seemed to thrive, even though their water temperature dropped low into the 50s in January and February.

Although the fish ate flake food, they seemed to hate it. They really perked up when the ponds thawed and daphnia and ice worms were available. They had a curious way of eating. The fish would sit motionless in the water until a daphnia came near; then it snapped it up with a sideward motion of its head. The combination of live food, lengthening light periods, and warming temperatures seemed to bring on spawning condition, and the female began to fill with eggs. The male turned black and started following the female around the tank, flirting with her. In trying to attract the female, he went through some really exaggerated gyrations of body and fins. He waved his dorsal fin in rapid rhythm, made back and forth body movements and alternate backward and forward "walking" movements of ventral fins. The female often assumed a head-up, tail-down stance.

All of this prespawning ritual went on for the months of March, April, May, and June. Although I never saw an actual spawning, I did see small numbers of larval fish about 1 mm long, hanging from tank walls and furnishings. These took several days to become free swimming. When they did, they disappeared among the floating plants and swam in rapid dashes followed by sitting motionless. The young were very shy and were all but invisible. Some survived and grew up in the tank. Others were fished out, and fed on sponge grunge and green water. Later, they ate live baby brine shrimp. They grew slowly, but seemed hardy. All fry were colored similarly to the female.

By July, all the *E. evergladei* had been put out in my pond, and by the end of July the young were half grown. The males were already beginning to show darker coloration.

There are several descriptions in the literature of the spawning of this species. Reference 1 says that they are not nest builders; that their eggs are attached to plants and other objects. They spawn many times at two-week intervals, with a few eggs at a time. They reportedly spawn in late spring and early summer and post-season eggs are not released but are reabsorbed. Conditioning depends on the speed of the increase in temperature. They are said to hibernate at <10 degrees C, in deep water, and to spawn in warmer water.

Reference 2 tells where they were found and says they prefer quiet, well vegetated waters, and eggs are laid on aquatic vegetation. The egg incubation time is 65 hours at 25.5 degrees C. There are 25-30 eggs, and fry eat copepods in nature.

These fish have endearing ways and are so attractive that they remain my favorites even though I have already bred them. They have convinced me to have a cold water fish room for native fish.

References

1. Breder, C.M., and Rosen, D.E., Editors, *Modes of Reproduction in Fishes: How Fishes Breed*. TFH. Pages 425-426.
2. Lee, et al, Editors; *Atlas of North American Freshwater Fishes*. No. Carolina Biol. Survey, New York State Museum of Nat History, 1980-12, page 584.

Exchange Article

The Jack Dempsey
Story by Denyce K. Trudeau
***The Kitsap Aquarian*, September 1990**
Kitsap Aquarium Society

Editor's Note: This article is from our on-line Exchange Column for this month. Thanks to Exchange Editor Armand Sichi and Connie Yarris, who prepares articles for on-line use. Visit gpasi.org/exchange.html.

This month we will be considering one of the larger and more aggressive members of the Cichlid family. Because they are so aggressive, often aquarists will have only one specimen in a large aquarium (at least 45 gallons) by itself. Landscaping does present somewhat of a problem because this fish has a reputation for uprooting and shredding live plants just to entertain itself. Jack Dempseys, once mature and kept in optimum condition, are among the more beautiful freshwater species available to aquarists.

Scientific name: *Cichlasoma octofasciatum*. Pronounced: Sick'la-so'ma awk-tow'fa-se'aw tum. Incorrectly known as *Cichlasoma biocellatum*

Water Conditions: Not critical; neutral to mildly acid is preferred (6.6 to 7.0 Ph); temperature should average 76 degrees.

Disposition: A very aggressive cichlid. Continually uprooting plants. Should be kept with other large, aggressive species that can hold their own. Extra aeration is helpful and large aquariums are required.

Size at Maturity: Males are about 8 inches; females are about 6 to 7 inches; both are occasionally larger.

Food Requirements: Acts like it is hungry at all times. Prefers large chunked foods. Will accept, chopped-up earthworms with gusto. Also, beef heart that is cut to an appropriate size to be easily swallowed is eagerly accepted. Chunks of clam and raw fish appreciated. Some have been known to accept pellet-type foods but not often.

Color Patterns: Mature males are a deep brown to black. Round spot in the center of the body and another at the caudal base; females are drabber in comparison. With age, their color becomes fixed, and less likely to change when under stressful or excited conditions. Numerous metallic blue and blue-green spots below the eyes and on the gill cover. Fins have blue spots; rays are black. Dorsal fins of mature specimens are bordered with red or yellow.

Differences Between Sexes: Dorsal and anal fins of male are pointed; females' fins are rounded. Coloring of male is brighter and more striking. At maturity, male is larger.

Life Expectancy: Up to 10 years or more if kept in large quarters under proper conditions.

Breeding Habits: Regardless of the aggressive behavior displayed, this species is a gently and devoted parent at all times. The spawning takes place on a flat surface and in the typical Cichlid fashion. The fry will hatch in 3 to 5 days, becoming free-swimming in about 7 days. Once the eggs hatch, the parents keep busy moving the fry from one pit in the gravel to another. Spawns can easily yield up to 450 eggs. Once the fry become free-swimming, they readily accept newly hatched brine shrimp. Because growth is rapid, larger food is soon required. Excellent second foods are live Tubifex worms, finely chopped-up earthworms, beef heart, raw fish and minced clams.

AHAP Totals for 2003

The purpose of the Aquatic Horticultural Award Program (AHAP) is to promote the keeping and propagation of aquatic plants, aid in the recognition of the species, encourage research through the growth and propagation of different species, recognize achievements of individuals through awards, and disseminate information through GPASI's *Finformation* and through the general meetings. If you have questions, contact AHAP chair Cavan Allen at (412) 221-9499 or Millsman7@yahoo.com.

AHAP 2003 points

Cavan Allen - 240 -- 15 propagations, 3 flowering, 1 sexual propagation
 Ted Neill - 115 -- 8 propagations, 1 flowering
 Marlene Scholze - 55 -- 2 propagations, 2 flowerings
 Mark Short - 35 -- 5 propagations
 Rick Reiter -20 -- 2 propagations
 Mike Recklitis - 15 -- 1 propagation
 Tom Connors - 5 -- 1 flowering
 Cliff Zigler - 5 -- 1 propagation
 Walter Roth - 5 -- 1 propagation

Lifetime (2001-present)

Cavan Allen - 1,200
 Sallie Boggs - 760
 Ted Neill - 520
 Tom Connors - 305
 Walter Roth - 245
 Marlene Schulze - 210
 Jason Clester - 150
 Atsuko Zigler - 125
 Cliff Zigler - 120
 Terrence Trasatti - 115
 William Wells - 70
 Mark Short - 65
 Mike Recklitis - 65
 Wally Cox - 40
 Bill Montgomery - 25
 Rick Reiter - 20
 Mark Seidel - 10
 Bill Sensor - 10
 John Lewis - 5

The following national businesses and our local sponsors (listed on the back cover) have given GPASI the fuel it needs to have a great year. Please support all our sponsors and thank them for helping to make our show and our club a success.

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Aquarium Technology
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(continued next page)

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Blacksburg, VA 24060

**That Fish Place and
That Pet Place**
www.thatpetplace.com

Upcoming Events of Interest

2/15 TFCEC Auction, North Boston, NY 716-649-9165 – Randy Seufert
2/29 SCALES Spring Auction, Perry Grange, Massillon, Ohio--contact Don McGuire (330) 833-7194; Mike Taylor (330) 834-9337; or John Baad (330) 452-9027

3/7 Akron Auction, Tallmadge, Ohio (330) 848-3856 – Bud White
3/21 YATFS Auction 330-824-2653 – Curt Smith

4/3 Great Lakes Auction, Euclid, Ohio (440) 944-3245 – Ron Georgeone
4/16 – 18 ALA Convention, Kalamazoo, Mich 330-650-4613 - Rich Serva
4/30 – 5/2 GPASI Fish Show at the Palace Inn, Monroeville

6/19 Great Lakes Auction, Euclid, Ohio (440) 944-3245 – Ron Georgeone
6/26–27 SCALES Show and Auction, Perry Grange, Massillon, Ohio--contact Don McGuire (330) 833-7194; Mike Taylor (330) 834-9337; or John Baad (330) 452-9027

7/22–25 ACA Convention, Denver, Colorado

8/07–08 Akron Show, Tallmadge, Ohio (330) 848-3856 – Bud White
8/21–22 YATFS Show + Auction 330-824-2653 – Curt Smith

9/18 Great Lakes Auction, Euclid, Ohio (440) 944-3245 – Ron Georgeone

10/17 YATFS Auction 330-824-2653 – Curt Smith

11/7 Akron Auction, Tallmadge, Ohio (330) 848-3856 – Bud White

Ongoing Reptile Swaps at Palace Inn in Monroeville, PA Herb Ellerbach (412) 361-0835

GPASI Marketplace

BUY

Armand Sichi wants to buy 4 tank dividers for a 20L gal. You can reach him at 724-872-6760 or asichi@verizon.net.

Mike Parahus wants to buy up to 6 long-finned white cloud mountain minnows. He'd like a mix of males and females and is not interested in the "golden" variety. He would also like to buy up to 6 *Rasbora brigittae*. (724) 843-0584.

Mike Ott would like to buy a copy of *The Proper Care of Guppies* by Stan Shubel. Mike can be reached at 412-487-9513 or meo001@aol.com.

SELL

Walter Roth has plastic bags to sell in 100 count packages. Sizes are 6 x 12", 8 x 15", 10 x 20". Call (724) 449-9651.

Sharon Serbin designs and creates fish-related art: stained glass mosaic tables and wall hangings; tile mosaic floors; and hand-painted T-shirts and other clothes items. E-mail sjsrbin@pgh.net or page her at (412) 949-3106.

Ross and Laura Cronkhite still have assorted tanks (from 15 gallon up) for sale at 65 cents on the gallon, plus airline and fittings, a few nets, and a supply of 5 gallon buckets and 4 and 5 quart ice cream buckets, and assorted stands. Contact (412) 233-0996 or lauross@libcom.com

To let other members know about aquarium-related items you'd like to buy, sell, or trade, contact Jean Grace at (412) 441-1106 or jgrace@pitt.edu

Special Thanks to Our Local Sponsors for Their Support

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	Walk-in hours: Tue. – Sat., Noon to 7 pm	
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Elmer's Aquarium & Pet Center	4005 William Penn Highway, Monroeville	(412) 372-6535
In Leafy Shadows	ilshadows@excite.com	(412) 369-0499
Krispy Kreme Doughnuts	Rt. 19 in Cranberry Twp; Century III; Eastgate Mall in Greensburg	
Linda's Lovely Angels	www.lindaslovelyangels.com	
Pet Boutique	513 Mckean Ave, Charleroi	(724) 483-5700
Pet Supplies "Plus"	4714 McKnight Road, Pittsburgh	(412) 369-7350
Pet Supply Warehouse	Roseytown Road, Greensburg	(724) 834-0500
Petland	Miracle Mile Shopping Ctr., Monroeville	(412) 380-2522
Pittsburgh Marine Aquarists Society	http://pmas.org	
Shene's Killies	http://shene.killi.net	(724) 449-9651
Three Guys Aquatics	www.threeguysaquatics.com	
Walt's Water World	4151 Grandview Dr., Gibsonia	(724) 449-9651
West Hills Pet Center	West Hills Shopping Center, 925 Broadhead Road, Moon Township	(412) 262-2220
Wet Pets and Friends	Waterdam Commons, Rt. 19, McMurray	(724) 942-4442

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January 2004