

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*

**In this issue:**

**3 President's Message**  
**Clay Trachtman**

**4 My Black Beauty**  
**Karan Haas**

**5 Hello Hydra**  
**Tammy Jines**

**6 My Experience with *Synodontis angelicus***  
**Jim Valenzuela**

**8 Schools of Fish**  
**Jackie Lee Byers**

**10 *Amatitlania nanolutea***  
**Gerald Griffin**

**15 Three Easy Steps to Breeding Bettas**  
**Steven Tran**

**17 From the Editor**  
**Gerald Griffin**

**On the Cover:**  
***Amatitlania nanolutea* Wild Male**  
**Photograph by Hans van Heusden**

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

Fish Tales - 2



Volume 9 Issue 4

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:

Please submit all articles 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.

Art Submission:

Graphics and photo files may be submitted in any format. However, uncompressed TIFF, JPEG or vector formats are preferred. Please submit the highest resolution possible.

Next deadline.....  
March 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, San Antonio, Texas.

# President's

# Message

## Clay Trachtman

Wow, another 3 months have passed and it is time for an update from the President of FOTAS. First, I want to start off by publically thanking Lisa Hustetler for her years of service as Secretary of FOTAS. Lisa has decided that it is time for her to resign from her position as Secretary of FOTAS as she, and her husband Mike, have decided to scale back on the fish-keeping hobby and pass on the job to some new blood. With that being said, if you are interested in becoming the new Secretary of FOTAS, please let me know.

The FOTAS website ([www.fotas.info](http://www.fotas.info)) has been recently updated. It features a calendar, information about our scholarships and pictures from FOTAS 2019. Please check it out. Also, if you have pictures from previous FOTAS conventions, please send them to me and I will add them to the website.

In other news, I am very pleased to announce that my home club, the Southeast Louisiana Aquarium Society (SELAS) has started a new program called "Schools of Fish". The Schools of Fish program is detailed in an article by Jackie Lee Byers in this issue of FOTAS Fish Tales, but basically we are partnering up with Louisiana Fish Store and Aqueon to provide aquariums to schools in Baton Rouge. I encourage other clubs to do something similar in their localities to promote the hobby to future generations.

Finally, we are getting closer to FOTAS 2020 in Austin. As president of FOTAS, one of the things that I really want to strive for is for our annual convention to be a can't miss event, and from what I am hearing, this is going to be an event that will fit the bill.

Thank all of you for supporting your local aquarium club. I look forward to seeing many of you in Austin in 2020.

# My Black Beauty

**Article by Karen Haas**  
**Photo by Patrick Calhoon**

**M**y first introduction to one of my favorite catfish happened last year. I found a large aquarium on craigslist. The seller was downsizing after losing most of his fish due to the early snowstorm. In one of the tanks that were still running, was this big black shark like catfish. Several times, it came out of its cave, cruised around the tank upside down, and then went back to its hiding spot. "What kind of *Synodontis* is that?" I said. He said that it was a *Mystus* not a *Synodontis* catfish.

I've done some research on this beautiful catfish, *Mystus leucophasis*. I found very little information in the books I have so I've turned to the internet. This catfish is often sold at a size of 2-3 inches as an Asian upside down catfish. It is almost never seen swimming right side up, unlike the *Synodontis* upside down catfish. *Leucophasis* is solid black often acquiring silver specks on its sides. Females can reach a total length of 12 inches, males slightly smaller. Easily sexable, males have a predominant genital papilla just in front of the anal fin. They originally come from rivers in Myanmar, formerly known as Burma, but are being bred commercially. No captive breeding has been reported. Planetcatfish.com lists the water parameters as pH 6.0-8.0 and 73-80 degrees Fahrenheit. Most members in Monster Fishkeepers have the opinion that only one of these can be kept per tank. Not so, I viewed several videos on

YouTube.com that show several of them coexisting in a tank at the Sum Wywrotek Zoo in Poland. According to Scotcat.com you can keep several females, but only one male. There needs to be plenty of caves so that each can have one to call their own. They will be belligerent defending their cave and will eat smaller fish. It is recommended to keep them with cichlids or other fish similar to the size of your black beauty.

I acquired my *Mystus leucophasis* last year at the Catfish Convention auction hosted by the Potomac Valley Aquarium Society. I don't think it has grown more than an inch in that time and is about 7 inches now. I am currently keeping it in a 150 gallon tank where it has chosen a Zoo Med floating log for its cave of choice. Unlike the one I saw previously, mine rarely comes out of its home during the day. When I see it cruising around the tank before and after the lights are on, I put some flakes in the tank or other dried or frozen food for it to eat. Its two pair of smaller barbels are like little fingers feeling the surface for the food before devouring it with gusto. If you want to keep one of these I would recommend installing an automatic feeder to dispense food at night if you can't be around to do it. This will help discourage it from molesting smaller fish in your tank while they're sleeping.

# Hello Hydra

**Article by  
Tammy Jines**

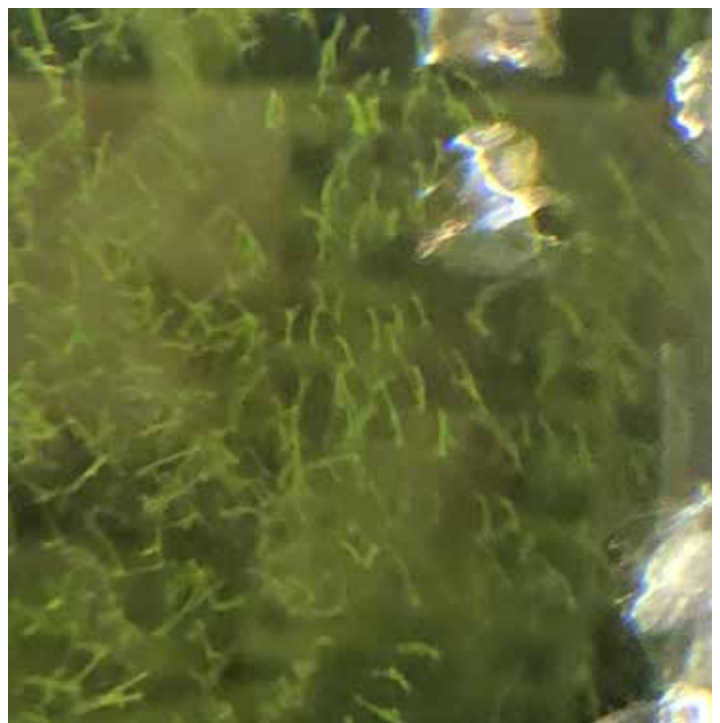
Photograph from Wikimedia Commons

**H**ello Hydra, nice to see you, but you killed my last fry so you must die. (My Sean Connery imitation). Seriously these guys are not your friend even if they are really cool.

Hydra are actually similar to a fresh water anemone. They eat live food and sting their prey with venom to capture. They thrive off the brine shrimp you feed your fry. They will also sting your fry stressing them out and even killing them.

I noticed algae in my fry tank and when I went to clean the tank these little guys retracted when you touched them. Realizing that it's not algae I googled it.

I got rid of most by cleaning but they do regenerate and can move around the tank. To control Hydra do not over feed your fry live brine shrimp and keep lights off. Try to switch your fry over to flake food as soon as you can. You can use dog dewormer or a medication called Benibachi Planaria Zero found on Amazon to kill all the Hydra.





# My Experience with *Synodontis angelicus*

Article and Photos  
by Jim Valenzuela

**S***ynodontis angelicus* is a wonderful catfish from West Africa. The species is native to the Congo Basin of Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of the Congo. It is known as one of the up side-down catfish. It was originally described in 1891 by Belgian ichthyologist Louise Schilthuis after its discovery in the Malebo pool of the Congo River. This river-dwelling catfish has a large range, but details concerning its exact distribution are sketchy. This *Synodontis* is jet black with numerous white spots. However, there are variations to the pattern and color. An absolutely stunning fish! The maximum size that has been reported is 9.5 inches. They are very slow growers in this author's opinion.

In my experience, I first read about this fish in the mid 1970's in one of my old TFH's. I didn't get to see one alive until the late 1970's. I was working at a fish wholesaler in the Los Angeles, California area. We would get in about a ½ dozen of these fish in each year. Not a common fish at that time. In fact, we would sell them to the retail stores for \$250.00 each. I have no idea what they were selling them for retail? These fish were about 2.5-3 inches. We always sold every one of them.

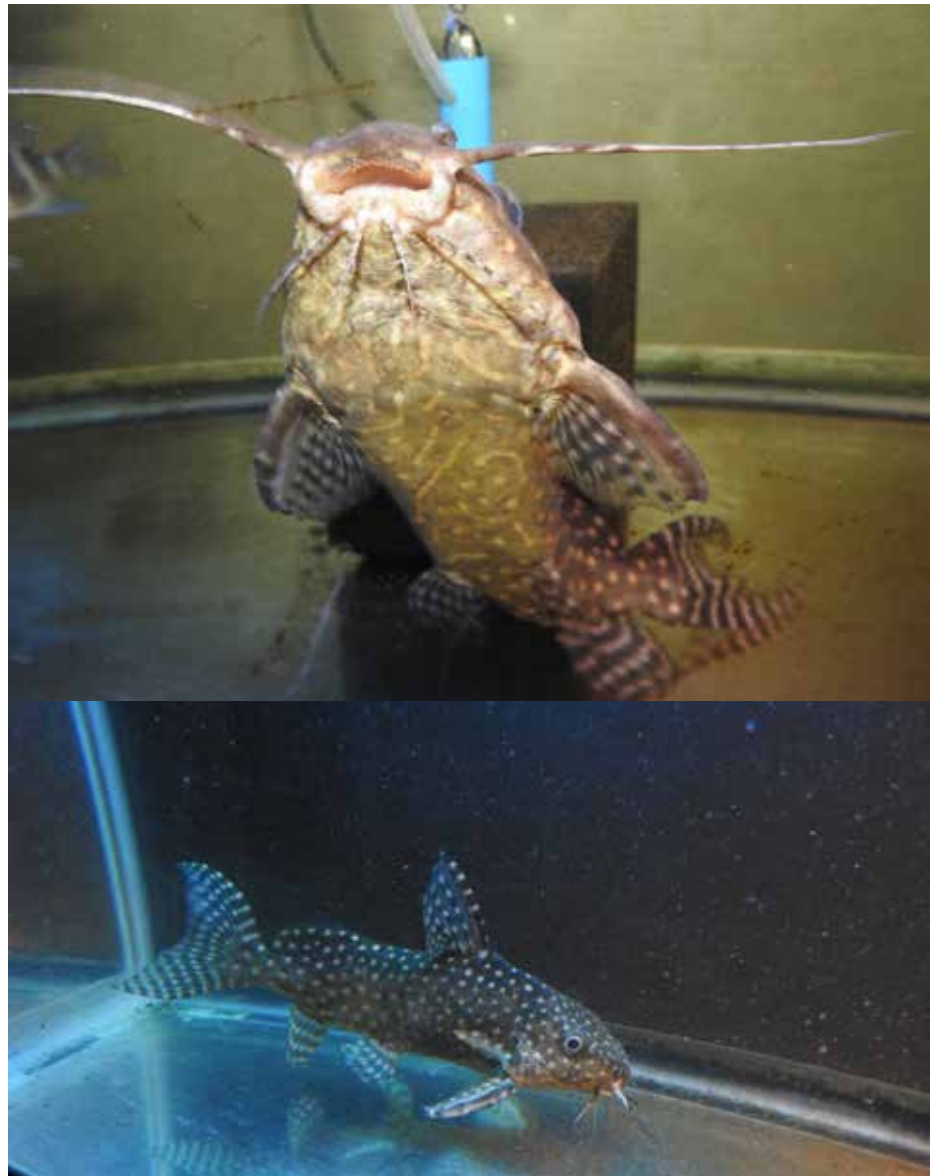
This is where my story begins. I purchased my *Synodontis angelicus* several years after working at the fish wholesaler. I was in shock to see the retail price that they were selling them for in this store. These fish were so much cheaper than the 20 years prior. As I write this

article I'm still not completely sure why the prices of these fish came down so much. I would imagine they are being bred in captivity or in ponds now. There's not a lot of information that I can find about their breeding habits other than they are egg-scatterers. At times, eggs have been produced in several public and private collections, but none have hatched.

Continuing with my story, I purchased my three inch individual from a retail store in Arizona while on my way to Louisiana as I was relocating for a new job. My catfish arrived in good condition and was put in a 40 gallon tank. No issues in this set up. The catfish was eventually moved to a newly set up 200 gallon tank. The decorations were rocks set up as caves, driftwood, a few artificial plants and a fine sand substrate. I was using a strong outside pressurized filter. I added a couple of strong power head pumps for a heavy current. My *Synodontis* was housed with larger South American fish, the catfish would rarely come out during day time hours. As the tank lights went off for the evening, I would occasionally see it come out of its cave to feed. The *Synodontis* seemed to be thriving and growing very slowly in the larger tank. The catfish was the king of its territory. It chased away aggressively all bottom fish.

The catfish continued to grow and it had many different tank mates. The growth was not noticeable, except when I hadn't seen it in months I would notice when it came out to feed. My fish was definitely not a showy type fish in my opinion. It hid all the time.

As I write this article, I'm very sad that due to an unfortunate circumstance, I'm having to give up the fish hobby for now and will be bringing all fish including this catfish to a local convention this weekend. I certainly have gotten attached to the catfish over the years. Funny, I had this fish longer than most parents have their children in the house! I often asked myself, why was I able to keep it for such a long time? I, like many hobbyists, have lost many fish due to negligence, lack of knowledge and stupidity. There had been a few power outages over the years or me just forgetting to put a water conditioner in during a water change. You name it, I have done it. For some unknown reason this catfish has survived for a very long time. I have been extremely lucky! I just realized I haven't given the date when I purchased my catfish. I can still remember exactly when he was bagged up at the three inch size. I bought it in March, 1994 and I'm writing this article on August 22, 2019. Yes, my 25 year old *Synodontis angelicus*!



## **GREATER AUSTIN AQUARIUM SOCIETY**

### **SPRING FUNDRAISER AUCTION**

**SATURDAY FEBRUARY 29TH, 12PM - 6PM**

**SUNSET VALLEY CITY HALL**

**3205 JONES ROAD, SUNSET VALLEY, TX 78745**

**FREE - OPEN TO THE PUBLIC - BUY, SELL OR OBSERVE - KID FRIENDLY - FISH, TANKS, EQUIPMENT, PLANTS, INVERTERBRATES, RARE ITEMS WILL ALL BE AVAILABLE - SELLERS PLEASE VISIT [GAASTX.ORG](http://GAASTX.ORG) FOR AUCTION RULES AND PRE-REGISTRATION - SNACKS AND DRINKS - [INFO@GAASTX.ORG](mailto:INFO@GAASTX.ORG)**

# Schools of Fish

Article and Pictures by  
Jackie Lee Byers

**T**he Southeast Louisiana Aquarium Society (SELAS) is bringing aquatic education to schools in the Baton Rouge area! The aquariums will help to reinforce classroom curriculum. They will also provide the opportunity for students to be responsible for feeding and maintaining the aquarium. Students will experience the value and balance required to keep an aquatic ecosystem stable.

Our first project was with Mayfair Lab School located in Baton Rouge. They had an existing 45 gallon tank running in one of their science classrooms. The setup was a big box store kit, meaning the filter was undersized and the lighting had already gone out. The décor was to mimic a saltwater tank, even though it was freshwater. SELAS partnered with Louisiana Fish Store to provide new filtration, lighting, glass lids, and more appropriate décor. Our goal was to mimic nature, so we changed to a natural sand, live plants, background, and driftwood décor.

The blood parrots (who were not healthy due to being in a small tank) were rehomed. Their replacements

Fish Tales - 8

include:

- Powdered Blue Dwarf Gourami x3
- Gold Tiger Endler's Livebearer x15 (and tons of babies!)
- Zebra Danios x10
- Neon Tetras x15
- Green Corydoras x8
- Nerite Snails x6
- Amano Shrimp x3
- Blue Velvet Shrimp x10

Mayfair Lab also has a gardening program and uses dirty fish water from water changes to feed the garden! The students get to learn hands-on about the nitrogen cycle inside and out the aquarium.

Apart from the educational aspect of aquariums, they also provide a calming effect to the room. As many of us know, our aquariums are therapy to us. This leads us to our second project we took on.

A teacher at Louisiana School for the Deaf, located in Baton Rouge, approached Louisiana Fish Store about



a classroom tank that she wanted to set up for her students. She mentioned that she had a “fake aquarium with plastic sharks floating around” which her students adored. This inspired her to set up an aquarium with real fish. She tried to get the costs covered through a grant, but they just gave her coupons (for products we would not recommend). She was prepared to go out of pocket, but was concerned about costs, so SELAS became involved. She already had purchased a 10 gallon tank. SELAS provided a filter, substrate, live plants, glass lids, background, light, live plants, and fish.

Because her students cannot hear, visual stimulation was our priority. The students would not be able to hear the sound of running water, so we wanted to MAXIMIZE what they could see. She has told me when a child becomes upset or stressed with their curriculum (like learning sign language), it is routine to take a “fish break” and enjoy the tank for a few minutes to calm down. The kids also look forward to the responsibility of performing water changes and feeding the fish.

The Louisiana School for the Deaf livestock includes:

- Crowntail Betta x1
- GloFish Danio School (1 pink, blue, orange, yellow, and green)
- Amano Shrimp x1
- Ghost Shrimp x4
- Nerite Snails x3

For the upcoming school year, SELAS plans to expand on the “Schools of Fish” program by offering up complete aquarium setups to other schools in the Baton Rouge area. The only requirement being that the schools be willing to perform proper maintenance on the aquarium. A SELAS volunteer will be there to help set it up and teach water changes. During the summer months, Louisiana Fish Store has agreed to take the fish back and replace them with equivalent fish when the school year starts again. Summer care of fish has really been a detriment to schools keeping aquariums according to discussions that were conducted with



educators.

To do this, we need more volunteers to help set up the tanks. If you are local to Baton Rouge and are available during school hours, please email [jackie@selas.us](mailto:jackie@selas.us). If you would like to contribute to the costs of Schools of Fish, please send payment to PayPal. Be sure to leave a description with “Schools of Fish”. Cash donations can be dropped off at Louisiana Fish Store.

If you have any questions or comments please email [jackie@selas.us](mailto:jackie@selas.us) for more information.



# *Amatitlania nanolutea*

Article by Gerald Griffin  
Pictures by Hans van Heusden

Several years ago, I acquired 3 fish from a FOTAS Convention in San Antonio at the Funny Money Auction. The bag was labeled “Yellow Convicts” and the irony was that I really wasn’t interested in them but got stuffed with them in the auction. So, I figured what the hell, brought them home and put them in a tank on my Cichlid Rack and let them be not really thinking about them. A year later I saw them colored up and thought wow, nice, I am going to have to look them up. I was down to two fish now and I kept wondering why I was not getting babies, so I figured I had two of the same sex. I contacted friends to obtain a breeder from someone and no one had any. I had no idea who I had got them from the auction. Eventually one of my friends, Karen Haas had fry and I purchased some. I did some tank cleaning for the new fry and when I had gotten around to cleaning my “Yellow Cichlid” tank the fry in the tank were larger than the fry I had just received. So, I actually did have a pair! At our next club meeting I auctioned off some of my fry and the fry I had received from Karen and submitted my BAP. As soon as I had finally auctioned off the fry and cleared out their tank they spawned again. So, in the space of a year this species went from a back-burner project to one of my favorite Cichlid species in the world. I had kept other species of the Genus and although some were cute, I never kept any

long term because my focus was on BAPing them and moving on. Had I realized how actually stunning they were they would have been the centerpiece of my 180 gallon.

After my wife’s cancer we had to change our living arrangements and had to do a considerable downsizing from over 100 tanks down to 4 tanks. So, I had to decide which species I was willing to part with and which I absolutely wanted to keep. The 4 that I kept were *Amatitlania nanolutea*, *Betta teaniata*, *Julidochromis reagani*, and some miscellaneous cichlids I could not get auctioned off. I have had some species move in and out however the *Amatitlania nanolutea* always stayed. Since then I have spent many hours watching my new favorite cichlids do their thing in their aquarium and after I move out the last batch of fry the magic happens again and I am greeted with new fry. One of the quotes I remember most from Dean Hougen at one of our OKAA meetings stated that “Cichlids are only aggressive when they are breeding. In the home aquarium Cichlids are always breeding!” This is true with this species and even in the bigger tanks where I have some of their babies, they have formed pairs and if given a chance to be alone they would be producing fry as well. So what do we know about this species?

The current listed species name is *Amatitlania nanolutea* and was described by Robert Allgayer in 1994 as *Archocentrus nanoluteum* and was published as Description d'une espece nouvelle du genre *Archocentrus* Gill & Bransford 1877 (Pisces: Cichlidae) du Panama Revue Française des Cichlidophiles. pp. 6-24. In 2016 the genus was changed to *Amatitlania* and accepted. A number of cichlids in that group got changed and *Archocentrus* was no longer accepted. The actual correct name is Yellow Dwarf Cichlid however it is often times called the "Yellow Convict" which a number of Cichlid People hate as they feel it is derogatory to this particular species. Yes in fish circles the "Convict Cichlid" is considered to be the aquatic cockroach even though it is in the same Genus as our Yellow Cichlid. This species comes from Panama and is not rated on the Red List so it is in official terms not considered in danger. However, considering the amount of habitat destruction going on in Central America it is only a matter of time before they and many other fish of this Genus find their way on the endangered list. The CARES committee have already placed them as a CARES species so for them it is a Species of Concern.

*Amatitlania nanolutea* is sexually dimorphic which means they have physical differences in how the male and female appear. The female tends to be smaller than the male and is noted for having an ocellatus (eye spot) in the dorsal fin. As with the majority of cichlid species the male is larger and tends to have points or extensions coming off the dorsal and anal fin. The females fins typically do not have these points. Also in the majority of Cichlid species the males tends to be larger and in some species a lot larger than the females. In the wild they come from well oxygenated streams and rives with a wide range of pH so water conditions are not that critical. Typical substrates are open mud and sand to large cobble with boulders. Their wild habitat is know for being plant deficient.

When it comes to diet, they are not that picky however are supposed to require some plant material in their diet, so they are considered to be omnivores. I

do on occasion give them algae wafers which they go nuts for. I have fed a lot of fish foods to my yellow cichlids and Bug Bites seems to be their favorite. In fact, I have seen most fish totally go after this food when offered other alternatives in the same feeding.

As to aggression this species does well with other fish species which are not aggressive. I have kept them with guppies, catfish and angelfish without any problems. They are aggressive towards each other but conspecific aggression in Cichlids is a well noted trait.

So when it comes to this species they are considered a dwarf cichlid although the males can reach a size of 5 inches however 4 inches is more common. In my experience planted tanks do not work well as I have seen the males shred plants including Anubus. This makes me question if they do this in the wild as well. For a single pair a 20 gallon long or 29 gallon is totally acceptable and a pair will be quite happy making babies. For multiple pairs a much larger tank would be required, and I would not attempt this in anything less than a 55 gallon. As to long term keeping of this species they are considered a moderately difficult species to keep. I have read about others problems with this species but my experience says that this is an easy species to keep.

As stated earlier, you will know when the time comes for breeding. The female will change her color as you typically see with *Apistogramma* species to a very bright yellow with black stripes typically. The pair



A wild pair in their Natural Habitat.  
Photo by Hans van Heusden

I have had my female go all yellow or switch to the yellow with black lines, in fact the male does as well. Some references list this species as a substrate spawner however in my experience they are cave spawners with the female depositing the eggs to the top of the cave. If the cave is large enough for you to look into you will see the female go into the cave first and invert (flip upside down) and lay the eggs at the tops of the cave. The male will then enter the cave after the female and will then fertilize the eggs after inverting in the cave. Up to 200 eggs can be laid in the cave and the female then takes up guarding the eggs. The eggs hatch in 3 to 4 days and will typically drop to the substrate. In my tanks I use turface so they don't sink in very well. You can see them bobbing up and down on the substrate. After about 4 days of this the fry are off looking for food. I will add hair algae and java moss from other tanks and let the fry forage in it as I give them baby brine shrimp. After a few days of feeding baby brine shrimp I mix in golden pearls and decap brine shrimp eggs. After a few more days I switch in the fine Bug Bites and continue to raise them on that as well as algae wafers. By that time the parents have destroyed all of the plant material. Probably the best thing about

watching this species is how the mother is always caring for the babies and rounding them up where she wants them to be and the babies trying to be independent and strike out on their own. This is true in a lot of cichlid species however.

So if you are looking for a mid sized Cichlid that is easy to keep, enjoyable to watch and also a CARES fish then this species is for you. I have now distributed hundreds of these "Yellow Cichlids" to fish keepers all over the United States. My recommendation is that you register them as a CARES fish and seriously use a few tanks to maintain this species. Not only are they a fun fish but they are one that you will probably want to keep in your long term fish collection. I will be updating their status as it changes in the wild. Unfortunately, we will probably never have a system that stays updated as there are not enough people in field doing research and like all other species are subject to habitat degradation, pollution and climatic changes modify their current habitat. As with so many species their survival may be in your hands. So why not give this species a try, you might just fall in love like I did.



**A photograph of a wild female in front of her cave in natural habitat!  
Photograph by Hans van Heusden**



A wild female in natural habitat.  
Notice the missing ocellatus.  
Photograph by Hans van Heusden.



A wild male watching over fry.  
Photograph by Hans van Heusden.



A wild pair watching over their fry.  
Photograph by Hans van Heusden.

My primary pair coloring up. The females ocellatus is clearly visable.  
Photos by Gerald Griffin



The female in her cave with the male standing guard in their territory.



# Three Easy Steps to Breeding Bettas

Article and Pictures  
by Steven Tran

**S**o, you found your potential pair for breeding but you don't know where to start. There are many different breeding methods around the world. However, many breeders would agree that a healthy pair is what will increase the chances of a successful spawn and fry.

Here are 3 steps I use to increase the success of breeding bettas:

1. Conditioning
2. Water preparation
3. Quiet

First step is conditioning. What is conditioning exactly? In the context of breeding a pair it would be to prepare them for breeding. Conditioning does 2 things for the fish, ensures they're both well acquainted and encourages the female to produce more eggs (some females may produce more than others). Feeding and flaring are 2 of the most important aspects of conditioning. For feeding, finding high quality pellets or live food is crucial in producing quality sperm and eggs. My personal favourite is live and frozen food as they contain higher protein and fat (white worms, grindals etc). My observation shows that live food triggers their hunting instincts which encourages them to be more active. If you don't have live food, high quality pellets, frozen or gelatin food (Repashy Spawn and Grow) will do as well. Nowadays, many manufactures produce

higher quality fish food that have less fillers. In conjunction with water changes, I feed 2-3 times a day. Now as far as flaring goes, I will let them flare for 3-5 minutes a day. The conditioning duration of 1-2 weeks depends on whether I feel the female has produced enough eggs. As long as the pair are both interested and flaring, you are good to go! Keep in mind, light body females usually do not show vertical breeding bars and therefore I judge based on interaction between the two.

Water preparation is what I see as very important in keeping the fry healthy. Tap water is perfectly fine, here in Ontario we have safe tap water to drink but even then, I would use a water conditioner to take out any chlorine. I like to take a step further and boil my breeding water which is optional. Whether or not to use Indian almond leaves is up to you. Personally, I feel the benefits is to make it easier for the male to hold his nest together (stickier nest), anti bacterial and fungal properties and they seem to do well with lower ph. Some people have to use well water which increases the hardness. If you see your adult bettas not doing that well with it, you may use distilled/reverse osmosis water which is remineralized or mixed 50/50 with your tap water. Regardless of your water source, I would always use 1 tbsp of aquarium salt for every 5 gallons of water (even for my jarred fish). This helps with issues like infections and parasites (velvet is common fry

killer). There is no right or wrong spawning “tank” as said previously, everyone does it different. I’ve bred my bettas in different containers, tanks and water volume. I do agree that the more water you have the better it is for water quality. I can’t be bothered to tape up my tank’s sides with paper to hide their vision of me walking around my fish room so I breed them in plastic tubs.

Peace and quiet. That’s all there’s to it really. All you need to do is put the pair together and cover the top so they don’t jump out. Leave them alone! Some fish are much shyer and would feel stressed which may result in egg eating whether their eggs are healthy or not. I understand watching them is exciting but a giant hovering over or the side of their spawning territory may stress them out. Yes, it is possible that the male won’t eat the eggs but I’m not willing to take the chance. In terms of isolating a female in a bottle or jar and waiting for the male to nest is up to you. I just use a leaf that sank as hiding space for a female and leave them alone after I release both of them. I check back quietly every 12 hrs or so.

Thank you for reading my take on how I breed my bettas! Again, there are many different ways to breed bettas but this is the method that works for me. I believe this method is the reason why I am able to breed majority of the pairs I condition and producing bigger spawns as well. What works for me may not work for you and vice versa. My advice is to try different methods and take what works best for you.

Fish Tales - 16



Eggs visible from the top of the bubble nest



Young fry freeswimming.



Black Dragon Plakat



# From the Editor:

Honestly, I have never been so late with one of these Magazines. As with the real-world things just avalanche and this was the case with this issue. It was primarily done by the end of January however my personal life got in the way and I could just never find the time to sit down and finish this issue. I know Clay probably got sick of I need three hours to finish up. The reality was it was about 3 hours and then the proofing. Our world has changed and not for the better. As I was going on Spring Break my wife came down with Covid-19 and the world was changing big time. As a result, I had to go into crisis mode and deal with a number of issues in the International Betta Congress. For those that do not know, I am the Judging Board Chair. What that means is that I manage the worldwide show circuit and the standards that we use for Judging.

I held a couple of marathon meetings to get world on board with the decision to shut down our show system worldwide. This has never happened in the history of this or any other organization until the 'Rona' reared its ugly head. The next day my symptoms were apparent as I had just come down with it. During this time, I was literally unable to do any work despite trying. As soon as I was recovered enough to start doing "Fish Things" my workplace and state went to the online learning. That took a lot of time to get set up. Now that I am finished with that, I am finally able to put the finishing touches on this issue of Fish Tales.

A couple of things you will note is that the page adds in the back are gone. All of these events have been cancelled just like the FOTAS Convention for 2020. These are things that we literally have no control over and the FOTAS Board made the only decision they could. We all wish we could have a Convention however this year it is totally out of our control. You will also find that the FOTAS CARES is also missing. In the next issue I am going to work on getting it set up right so expect a lot more about the FOTAS CARES in the next issue.

So the next Issue of Fish Tales? Honestly, the previous issues were 30 pages in length. This one comes in at 18. The adds in the back do not account for a lot of pages typically. The problem is lack of content. Anyone that has ever run a publication that is hobbyist based knows that many times the content is not there. This has been the worst I have ever seen it with any of my publications. Thirty years ago, when I ran the Oklahoma State Herpetological Newsletter, I always had content. In the last 10 years or so I have been doing "Fish Magazines" and we have always struggled with content. We have to find a fix for this if we want to continue this magazine. So please take a bit of your time and send content to me. Whether it be pictures, articles and even better, articles with pictures!

Best Fishes

Gerald Griffin  
Editor Fish Tales



# CALLING US "CONVICTS"



**It misinforms the hobbyist.**

**It hurts the seller.**

**It impedes conservation.**