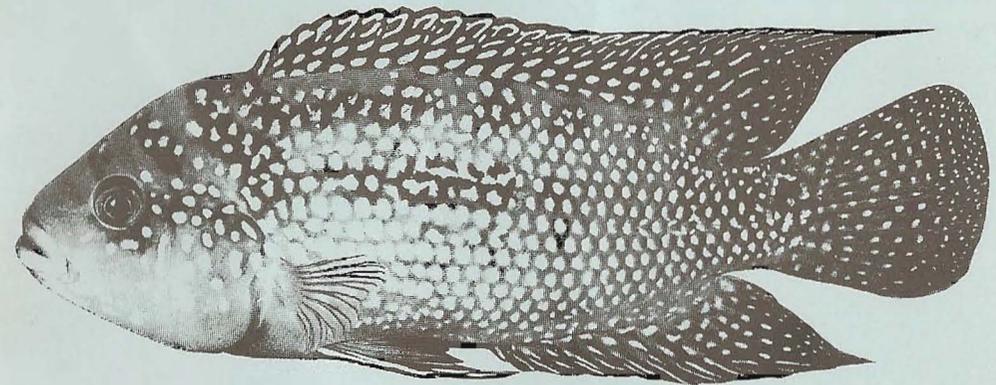
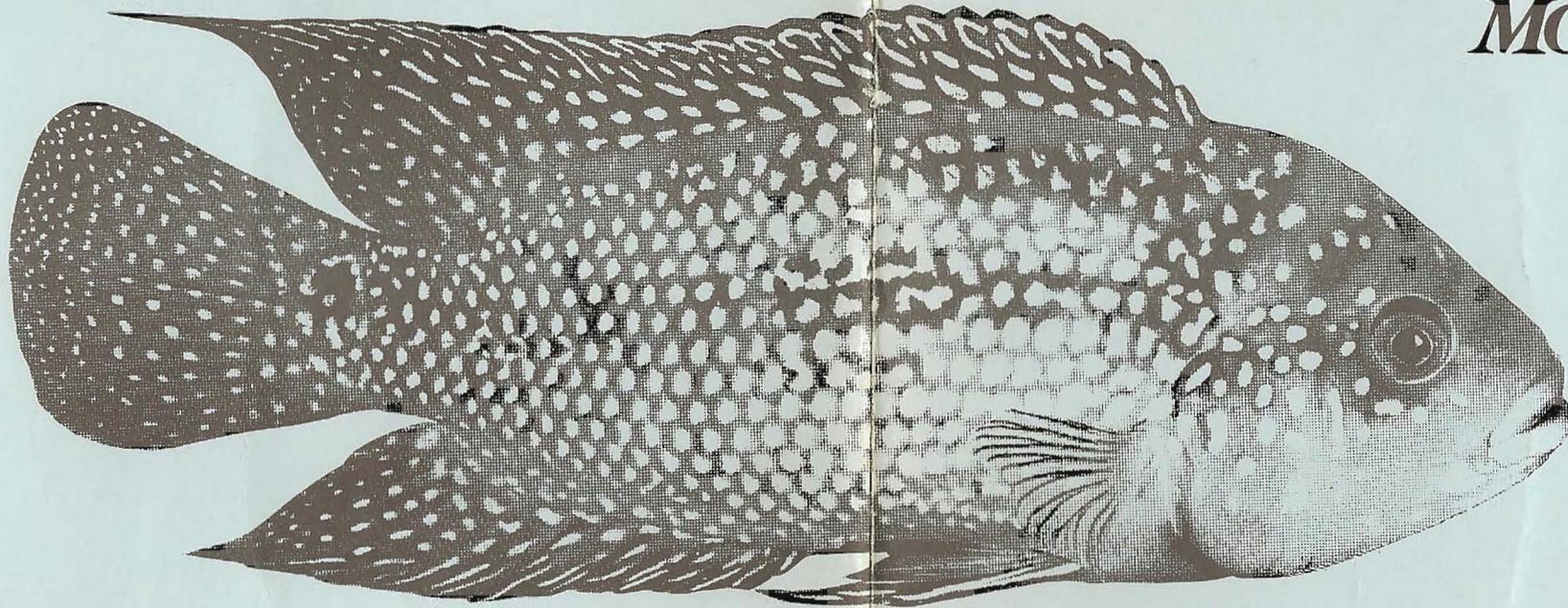


# THE CICHLID MONTHLY

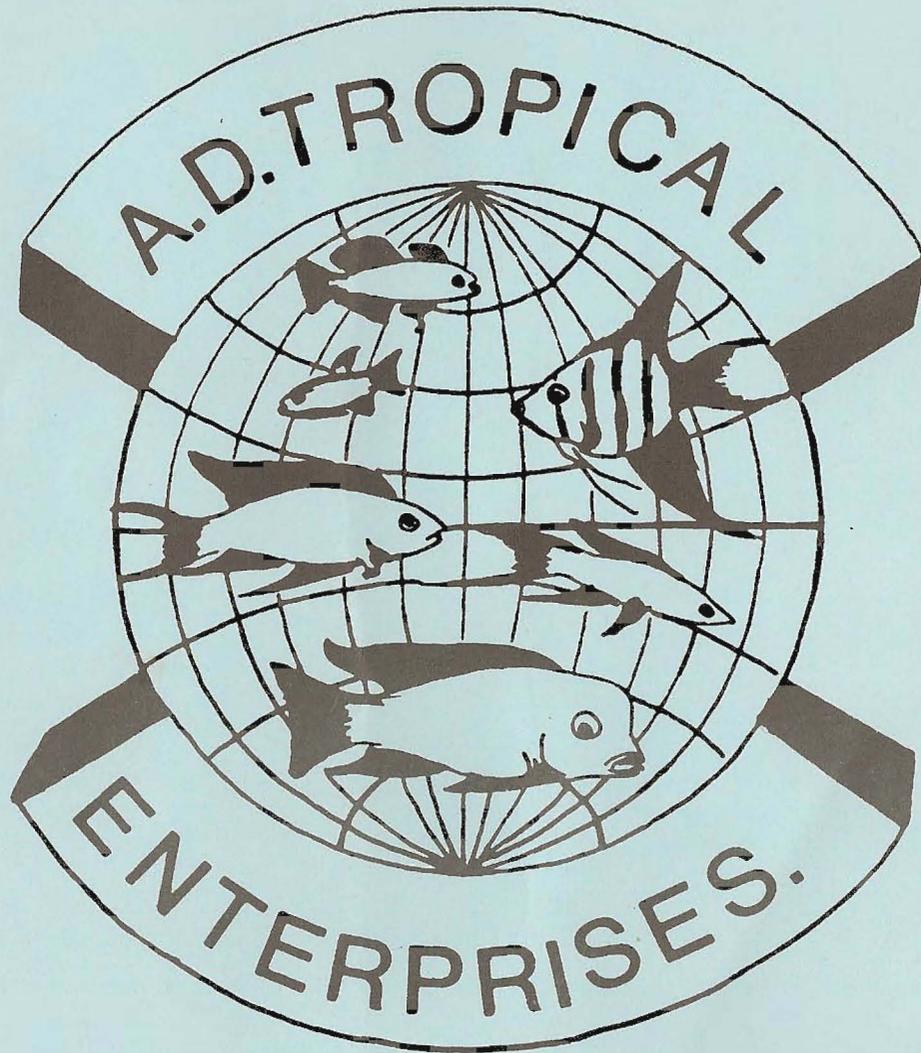


**VCS** 

Volume 16 No. 5 AUGUST 1987 — 50c  
**VICTORIAN CICHLID SOCIETY INCORPORATED**  
REGISTERED BY AUSTRALIA POST — PUBLICATION NO. VBH0291 CATEGORY B.

PO BOX 25,  
BALACLAVA,  
VICTORIA 3183.

PHONE: (03) 527 2546

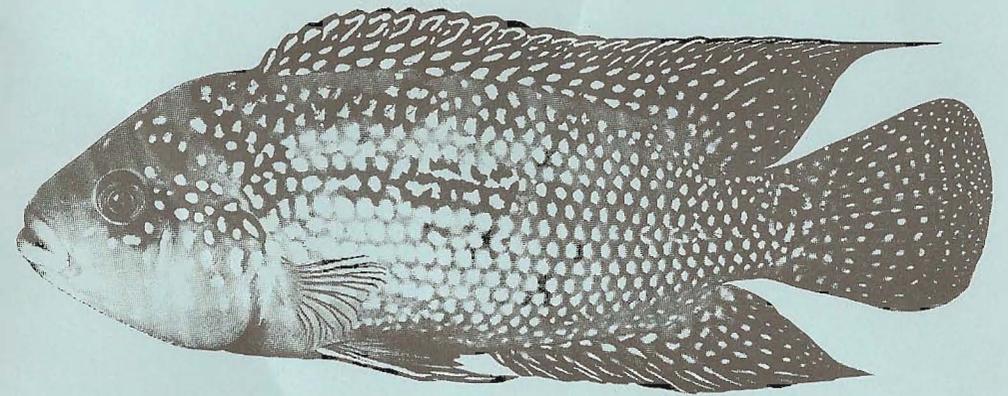


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*Cichlasoma nigrofasciatum*

**VCS**  

# THE CICHLID MONTHLY

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This magazine is produced and edited by Steve Morton  
assisted by Daryl Hutchins and Steve McCausland  
with the help of John Hogan and Neil McLaren.

The Cichlid Monthly is Registered by Australia Post  
— Publication Number VBH0291.

The Victorian Cichlid Society Incorporated is a member of the  
Federation of Victorian Aquarium Societies.

## AUGUST 1987

# VCS

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*The **Victorian Cichlid Society Inc**, formed by Cichlidophiles in March 1972, thus became the first specialist aquarist group in the State of Victoria.*

*The aims of the VCS Inc are: to promote the keeping of Cichlids; to gain and disseminate knowledge of their habits through slides, films, books, lectures, overseas magazines, articles by members and discussion with fellow members or other experts in the field.*

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The Cichlid Monthly is published monthly by:  
THE VICTORIAN CICHLID SOCIETY INCORPORATED,  
c/- 23 Mangana Drive,  
Mulgrave, Vic, Australia 3170.

# EDITO

The "mini" auction at last month's meeting did almost no end of good to our Society's balance sheet. A total of \$434 was raised from the auction of fish and other items, all of which were generously donated by members. Thanks to all those who contributed.

I think most Cichlid Monthly readers would have noticed that lately, articles about specific cichlid species have been few and far between. I would like to encourage some of our members to put pen to paper and tell us about their favourite cichlid. It's not that hard really. And to motivate you to write about your best fish I should remind you that we try to include a photograph accompanying an article in the magazine. We will arrange to photograph your fish and I don't know any keen hobbyist who doesn't like photographs of their fish. So come on, give it a go! Don't forget we can even help write the article if you're not too confident. Give me a ring and we can talk about it.

Finally just a quick reminder about the August meeting. Steve Butcher is telling us all about Julidochromis in the mini talk, Colin Parbery is discussing Discus in the main talk, and the Table Show is for Dwarfs - African and American.

Hoping to see you **all** at the meeting.

Steve M.

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## JULY MINUTES

Minutes of meeting held on 15/7/87. Meeting opened at 8.10 with 37 members and 16 visitors present.

Graham spoke on Fish of the Month - Apistogramma. Heinz thanked Graham for his talk.

Apologies were received.

Minutes of June meeting were taken as read on a motion moved by Danny and seconded by Aart.

|                        |          |
|------------------------|----------|
| Treasury: June balance | \$378.05 |
| Income                 | 800.00   |
| Payments               | 1138.96  |
| July balance           | 39.09    |

This report was received on a motion moved by Peter and seconded by Mark.

Correspondence was then read and tabled.

New members Craig Blitz and Sue and Danny Smith welcomed to the Society and presented with their badges.

Bruno defeated Peter Sorensen by the narrowest margin in the quiz and won a can of Sera food. Special mini auction was then held, followed by a short break.

Bill Paterson then gave a very informative and interesting talk on Genetics and Cichlids.

Kevin moved a vote of thanks which was carried by acclamation.

Draw prize: Jay Adams won "The Cichlid Aquarium"

Hanno van Dijk won the wine

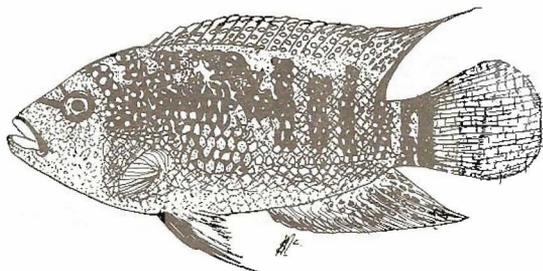
Luke McCrae won the 4 in 1 fish food

Table Show results were announced.

Scott was thanked for judging.

Door prizes given out courtesy of MAS

Meeting adjourned for supper at 11.35 pm.



# IN THE BEGINNING .....

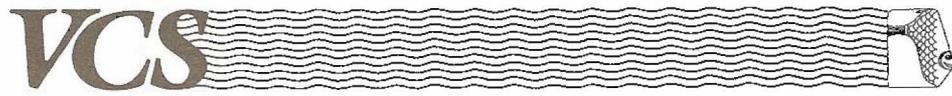
I sometimes wonder how a small and insignificant (did I say insignificant?) "wet" animal could become a time consuming, demanding tyrant. One only - perhaps never, but several - certainly. Like minute bacteria they grow and multiply with amazing speed, and like a dedicated scientist, the fish hobbist spends more and more time totally engrossed in their everyday behaviour as if some amazing and incredible phenomena is about to take place.

If all this sounds cynical, then no doubt you have guessed that I am not the fish hobbist, but the fish hobbist's wife. Never did I dream in my worst nightmare that I would identify with golf widows, football widows or the like. No! Not me! Smug as I was in the knowledge that mine was not a sporting hubby, I was not prepared for the impending event.

It all started with one goldfish - "Bindi". She was a cute little thing. Brilliant colour, long fantail, cheeky grin - why, anyone could see she was a girl.

I actually owned this "wet" animal for 5 years before I met Bill, then when I moved, she moved too. This was when the problems started. Bindi and I had shared a bedroom. Now we had a home of our own with so much space that Bindi's bowl paled into insignificance. "Why not get a larger tank?" I said. "Poor thing, she's probably quite cramped". A two foot tank was borrowed and set up. For a while Bindi did laps in the round until she realised there was a "bigger world" out there. Bill set up the tank beautifully. It was quite elaborate for one goldfish. He had sculptured the gravel into sweeping slopes, layered the rocks and planted a potential forest of plants. What more could a fish possibly want? What more indeed! She needed a friend. Bill and I had each other, the dog and the cat had each other, but Bindi was alone. "The poor thing must be lonely" I said.

Looking back now I cringe when I think that it was at my insistence that Bill reluctantly purchased more fish - not one, but three more. Happily they swam and frolicked together. Bindi was ecstatic, and all was well until the time Bill and I went away on holiday. The "real" animals, i.e. dog and cat, were kellened, but what does one do with fish? Eureka!! A fish food block - there is the answer. It sounded easy, it was easy. But tragedy struck. On our return the water was cloudy and all were dead including my beloved Bindi. It certainly was a day for mourning.



That could have been the end of this rather sad story, but it wasn't. Bill was determined to find the reason why and start again. He did and **HE DID** - to the extent where it was no longer a challenge to keep cold "wet" animals, they had to be warm "wet" animals. So, just like bacteria, they grew a bit more.

At this stage Bill purchased some *Geophagus jurupari* and Bristle-nose Catfish. Quite cute I thought. That should keep him happy, and it did. They grew and multiplied but Bill needed to be happier still so he bought other kinds, all South American Cichlids and catfish and they grew and multiplied. So did the tanks, so did the equipment and so did the **SEC bill!!** Just how much happiness can one person take, I thought?

However, it seems that fish keeping is not complete and happiness cannot be achieved unless the "wet" animals have their own room.

I was sure that this was where it would end, but how wrong can a person be? Now Bill is deliriously happy. Wall-to-wall tanks line the room and hundreds of pairs of beady eyes stare out at me seemingly with a knowledge far greater than their size would indicate. Like a National Parks Ranger the hobbyist patrols his domain inspecting tanks for recent spawnings. "What do you think about knocking a hole in this wall, love?" says Bill. "You know I really could do with a bit more space". Sometimes it doesn't pay to say anything, discretion being the better part of valour. However, I do sometimes wonder what it takes to turn delirious happiness into ultimate bliss.

By Jeni Foreman

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## A DIFFERENT SLANT ON THINGS - Bill Foreman

Recently I purchased 6 young *Cichlasoma maculacauda*, or Black Belts. Being a lover of South American Cichlids, I had long admired these fish after seeing some fine specimens in a few aquarium shops.

The young fish were approx 1.5" long and were taken home and settled into their new surroundings. Being in a fish house, and in a lower tank, I didn't take a great deal of notice of them, apart from feeding and water changes etc. As time went by, one of them decided that the floor was a better place than the tank, and this from a gap of less than an inch.

A couple of months after purchase, I began to notice that they were all swimming on a bit of an angle, not really apparent until they swam towards you. My first thought was that they had a type of swim bladder problem, and at the first opportunity I went back to the dealer for advice. He was at a loss to explain why, and on checking the remaining Black Belts in his tank we saw that they were all swimming normally. Eventually the largest fish got to about 4 inches, and by now they had all been swapped to another tank, with different rocks and surroundings. Still the lean, funnily enough they all leant the same way. As far as I was concerned, growing the fish up any further was a waste of time, but I didn't really want to knock them on the head - I'm glad I didn't.

One day, on entering the fish room - shock!! horror!! seven young firemouths were all doing the same thing, looking like aquatic versions of the leaning tower of Pisa. Suddenly the penny dropped!! I had the answer.

The tank stand that housed the Black Belts and Firemouths (at opposite ends) is about 13' long. It is three tanks high, and the offending middle row has four, three foot tanks side by side, with about 2 inches between tanks. To save on lights, both powerwise and cost of the units, I site one, three foot light over two adjoining 3 foot tanks, thus giving a partly shaded area at each end of the tanks. Somehow, having the light coming from one end of the tank caused all the problems.

Happily to say, upon moving the light directly over the tank, or off the tank completely, the fish returned to normal swimming in a very short time.



# LAKE MALAWI

Lake Malawi was previously known as LAKE NYASA. It has been with us for around about 5 million years and is perhaps the best known of the Rift Lakes which were created from sections of rivers by massive land movements. The Lake has the highest number of Cichlid species of all the lakes within the RIFT LAKE SYSTEM.

It is a deep lake where fish life is restricted to the upper levels. The majority of Lake Malawi's Cichlids live between the surface and a depth of fifty metres. Within this "liveable level", the water temperature is amazingly stable and doesn't vary beyond 23.5 - 27.5°C. The mineral content of the water is very similar to that of Lake Tanganyika with a very high mineral salt concentration, giving it a water hardness, varying from 330 to 510 parts per million and a pH of 7.7 - 8.8.

Apart from more than 230 cichlid species the lake contains in excess of 40 non cichlid species.

The lake is in the eastern part of Southern Africa situated well below the Equator and to the south east of Lake Tanganyika. It is 603 km in length, has a maximum width of 87 km, giving it roughly a surface area of thirty thousand square kilometres. Its deepest point has been measured at 758 metres.

Lake Malawi receives most of its water from rainfall as large river inflow is almost insignificant, the main outflow occurs by means of the Zambesi River.

## THE CICHLIDS OF LAKE MALAWI

### **Aristochromis**

christyi

### **Aulonocara**

machrochir

maylandi

nyassae

### **Chilotilapia**

rhodesii

### **Cleithrochromis**

bowleyi

### **Corematodus**

shiranus

taeniatus

### **Cyatochromis**

obliquidens

### **Cynotilapia**

afra

axelrodi

### **Diplotaxodon**

argentis

ecclesi

### **Docimodus**

(scale eaters)

johnstonii

evelynae

### **Genyochromis**

mento

### **Gephyrochromis**

lawsii

moorii

### **Haplochromis**

ahli

anaphyrmus

annectens

argyrosoma

atrtaeniatus

auremarginatus

balteatus  
boadzulu  
borleyi  
breviceps  
caeruleus  
callipterus  
chrysogaster  
chrusonotus  
compressiceps  
cyaneus  
decorus  
dimidiatus  
electra  
epichorialis  
ericotaenia  
euchilis  
eucinostomus  
fenestratus  
festivus  
flavimanus  
formosus  
fuscotaeniatus  
gracilis  
guentheri  
henrydaviesi  
heterodon  
heterotaenia  
holotaenia  
incola  
inornatus  
insignis  
intermedius  
jacksoni  
johnstoni  
kirkii  
kiwingi  
labidodon  
labifer  
labridens  
labrosus

*(formerly Melanochromis)*

lateristriga  
lepturus  
laecciscus  
likomae  
linnii  
livingstoni  
lobochilis  
longimanus  
macrostoma  
maculiceps  
maculimanus  
margaritae  
marginatus  
melanonotus  
melanotaenia  
micrentodon  
microcephalus  
mlotto  
modestus  
mola  
mollis  
moorii  
nigritaenitatus  
nitidus  
nkatae  
nototaenia  
obtusus  
oculatus  
ornatus  
orthygnathus  
ovatus  
pardalis  
phenochilis  
pholidophorus  
pictus  
placodon  
plagiotaenia  
pleurospilus  
pleurostigma  
pleurostigmoides  
pleurotaenia



polyodon  
polystigma  
prostoma  
purpurans  
quadrimaculatus  
rhoadsii  
rostratus  
selenurus  
semipalatus  
serenus/serranus  
similis  
speciosus  
spectabilis  
sphaerodon  
spilonotus  
spilopterus  
spilorhynchus  
spilostichus  
stonemani  
strigatus  
subocularis  
taeniolatus  
tetraspilus  
tetrastigma  
triaenodon/triden  
trimaculatus  
urotaenia  
venustus  
virgatus  
virginalus  
woodii

### **Hemitilapia**

oxyrhynchus

### **Iodotropheus**

sprengeriae

### **Labeotropheus**

fuelliborni

trewavasae

### **Labidochromis**

blue bar

caeruleus

chisumulae

flavigulus

freibergi

gigas

heterodon

ianthinus  
lividus  
maculicauda  
mbenjii  
mylodon  
pallidus  
shiranus  
strigatus  
vellicans  
zebroides

### **Lethrinops**

alba

alta

argenta

aurita

brevis

christyi

cyrtodontus

furcicauda

furcifer

gossei

intermedia

laticeps

leptodon

lethrinus

liturus

longimanus

longipinnis

lunaris

macranthus

macrochir

macrophthalmus

micrentodon

microdon

microstoma

oculata

parvidens

polli

preaorbitalus

stridei

trilineata

variabilis

### **Lichnochronis**

acuticeps

**Melanochromis**

- auratus
- brevis
- crabro
- exesperatus
- johanni
- melanopterus
- parrallelus
- perspicax
- simulans
- vermivorus

**Petrotilapia**

- niger
- tridentiger

**Pseudocrenilabrus**

- philander

**Psuedotropheus**

- aurura
- elegans
- elongatus
- fainzilberri
- fuscoides
- lanisticola
- livingstonii
- lombardoi
- lucerna
- macrophthalmus
- minutus
- novemfasciatus (*now known as Iodotropheus sprengerae*)
- tropheops
- tropheops-gracilior
- tropheops-romandi
- tursiops
- williamsi
- zebra

**Pseudotropheus sub species:**

- chameleo (*now known as Melanochromis crabro*)
- formoses

jacksoni

pindani (*synonyms: eduardi socolofi newsii*)

**Rhamphochromis**

- teyoi
- brevis
- esox
- ferox
- leptosomsa
- longiceps
- lucius
- macrophthalmus
- woodi

**Sarothorodon**

- karongae
- ldole
- saka
- shirana
- sparmani
- squamipinnis
- (*all six species were formerly known as Tilapia as well as being endemic to the Lake*)

**Serranochromis**

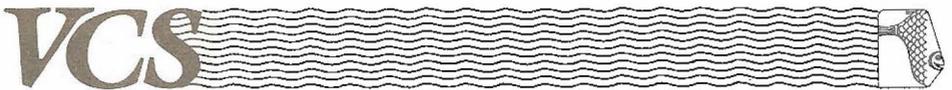
- robustus

**Tilapia**

- rendalli

**Trematocranus**

- auditor
- brevirostris
- jacobfreibergi
- microstoma
- peterdaviesi



# CICHLID POWER

Reprinted from "The Cichlid Monthly" August 1974 (Vol 3, No 4)

The Cichlid family of fishes has been around for quite a long time and will, no doubt, be around for much longer to come. However, in the minds of many aquarists' they are still the "black sheep" of aquarium fishes. *"A cichlid is a fish that you would wish into the tank of only your worst enemy. It is a nasty fish, a killer and a fish definitely to be avoided."*

Did you every stop to think how such intelligent, beautiful and interesting fish came to acquire such reputations? And why, despite statements such as the aforesaid, have so many fish keepers maintained them and gained immense pleasure from them? Let's try to discover why our cichlids' have gained this unjustified reputation.

First up we have the so called "business like" dealer, full of ignorance and prejudices. Right from the outset he refuses to handle, let alone breed, cichlids. They are nothing but trouble to him, and he thinks that he has plenty of that without the added problem of cichlids. So what happens? The enthusiastic hobbieist comes along and, by chance, happens to mention the name cichlid. Straight away the dealer, who would much rather sell him something already in his shop, tells this chap all the bad things about cichlids, with the results that this fellow is convinced that cichlids are the last fish he wants in his tank. He passes this information on to other aquarists and the word quickly spreads: *"Cichlids are out!"*

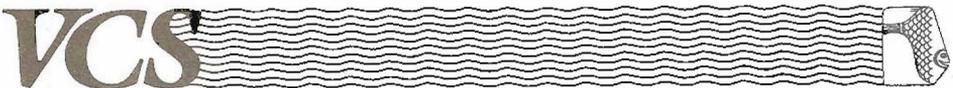
But why will a dealer form such an opinion about a fish that he himself has possibly never tried to learn anything about? This is the next question. Let us assume that our dealer has, early in his fish-keeping career kept a few cichlids; let us say a few juvenile Jack Dempsey. They looked very attractive and this inspired him to put some into his carefully set up and planted community aquarium. What happened? Initially the fish blended in satisfactorily. Then they grow; bigger, and bigger, all the time becoming more mature and more colourful. Then a few neons disappear. The fins of the Fighters and Angels become a bit tattered (he didn't know Angels are cichlids), and finally they start to claim territory over one section of the tank. A little digging here, a little there; rocks are rearranged and plants are uprooted. The poor aquarist eventually becomes a little tired of this, so called, normal cichlid behaviour and almost throws the fish back in the face of the dealer from whom he purchased them. The dealer, of course, gets the message and ceases to stock cichlids; this will save him a lot of trouble explaining cichlid behaviour to people (if he can), and further embarrassment and trouble. So rather than go into details with the next 'would-be' cichlidophile, he does his best to discourage him. Thus, another lie is born, a lie which will travel far.

In my opinion, the worst dealer is the one who buys in a swarm of young cichlids with the only aim of selling them as quickly as possible and making a "killing". People who are conned into purchasing cichlids in this manner, often with disastrous consequences, will also be put off for life.

So you can see there are many reasons for the undeserved reputation cichlids enjoy in the minds of some aquarists. All the so called faults of cichlids are really only the result of misreading their behaviour pattern. As Professor G. Sterba, a man whom I greatly admire, put it, the destructive nature of some cichlids in community aquaria, is "the outburst of a highly intelligent fish, kept under wrong conditions, in a wrong environment with no understanding of its needs". And how true this is! Of course we all have had a particularly nasty and vicious cichlid at some time or another, but many other fish occasionally show a nasty trait. The main thing cichlids have against them is their large size, and correspondingly large mouth which will swallow anything small enough to fit inside it. But most other fish will do the same; if you don't believe me just put a neon in a tank of baby guppies and see what happens. Or imagine if your tetras could grow to 12 or 18 cm in length, imagine how they would mix in with your smaller fishes. The aquarist must learn to recognise the conditions under which all his fish thrive; and this is especially true with cichlids.

I personally think that the greatest harm to the image of cichlids was done about 20 or 30 years ago in the "good old days" of fish keeping. Fish keeping first began in earnest in Europe, especially in such countries as Holland, Belgium, Germany, and Scandinavia. The quantity and quality of fishes available was more limited than it is now with the result that small livebearers, barbs, gouramis, danios, and tetras were the most widely kept species. In those days fish were hard to obtain and the transport costs involved and heavy losses made them very expensive. This was not the case with plants however, which could be gathered in the swamps and paddy fields of South East Asia and flown into Europe, free of quarantine restrictions, and at a very low cost.

It is no wonder then that most fishkeepers devoted most of their efforts to setting up beautifully aquascaped tanks. The Dutch in particular became very proficient at landscaping aquaria and as a result of their efforts the expression the "Holland" tank originated. Gradually the idea became accepted all over the world and became recognized as the way of maintaining "The Aquarium". Needless to say such a tank was no place for almost all cichlid species.



The tastefully created "Holland tank" has nevertheless continued to flourish. Standards and rules have been drawn up, and competitions arranged, with Holland tanks winning every time. Nothing has really changed in the last 15 years. Even today tanks are judged by the same old standards with the result that if you were to enter a plantless cichlid tank in your next club competition you would lose 30 points straight away. It is rather incredible how "good judges" decide a winning tank. Everything must look natural, plants, rocks, and fishes. They must all blend into a "perfect" picture.

In my opinion this is the most artificial, unrealistic, creation that the human mind could produce. There are plants from all corners of the world mixed in together, neons swimming around with barbs and danios, water that is crystal clear, rocks that have never seen water, in general a most **unnatural** picture.

Just ask yourself how would rocks from the middle of a desert every find their way into an Amazonian river, what about that thoroughly clean sand, without a trace of mulm in which no plant could possibly grow? But this type of set up is what judges regard as natural. What a joke! Surely it is time to broaden our minds a bit!

At this point many of you may be asking what all this has to do with cichlid power. Quite a lot really! Ask yourself what chance would a cichlid tank have in a competition judged according to these standards? None at all. So as a result no competitor, keen on gaining a place in a competition, would consider placing large cichlids in his tank.

Surely it is time to ask ourselves who has the right to make these rules and set show standards which are so out of date? It is high time that those responsible for organizing shows made arrangements for people that wanted to enter non-Holland tanks. A cichlid tank entered in such a competition should not lose points because it does not have any plants. The heater may be visible and the sand may all be heaped up one end but so what? A tank should be judged on the impression it gives the mind of the viewer, its decor and personality, and the aquarists' originality.

So why is a tank only eligible for an Aquarium show if it is set up the old way? Just imagine the plight of the fellow who wants to show his large pair of *Cichlasoma dovii* in a "Holland" tank. What a sight it would be. These large and magnificent fish munching their way through cryptocorynes, hairgrass, and Queen of Hearts. What is that you say? Why not use small cichlids, Apistogrammas, Nanacaras etc.? But this is not the point. Why should the fellow who wants to show off his large cichlids be penalized right from the outset?

The cichlid fishes are, today, one of the most sought after of all aquarium fishes. Australia alone has 3 cichlid societies. There are 7 in the U.S.A. and a national one with over 1500 members, many of them from overseas. Cichlid power is therefore definitely on the move; our society currently looks after 160 different species thus ensuring that we will never be without those wonderful fish called **Cichlids**.

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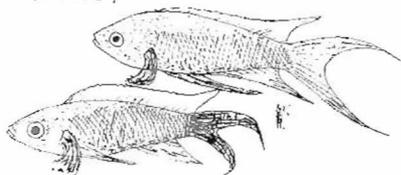
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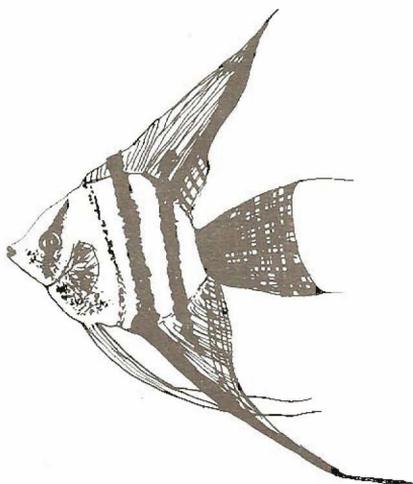
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# TABLE SHOW REPORT

July was our fourth Table Show for this season - Americans and Asians. Probably due to a bitterly cold evening, only five entrants braved it to bring their fish along.

What we lacked in quantity was made up in quality.

We like to welcome to the judging panel a new judge, Scott Haymes, and thank him for his good effort.

| Tank | Specie                         | Entrant     |
|------|--------------------------------|-------------|
| 1    | Herotilapia multispinosa       | A Langelaar |
| 2    | Cichlasoma synspilum           | J Shields   |
| 3    | Cichlasoma severum (green var) | A Gilfillan |
| 4    | Ampliacanthoides uaru          | D Berry     |
| 5    | Cichlasoma synspilum           | M Vella     |

## Judge's Report

| Tank | Gen/Cond | Fins  | Shape | Scales | Age   | TOTAL |
|------|----------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| 1    | 20/30    | 18/30 | 10/20 | 5/10   | 7/10  | 60    |
| 2    | 28/30    | 28/30 | 18/20 | 8/10   | 10/10 | 92    |
| 3    | 26/30    | 28/30 | 17/20 | 6/10   | 4/10  | 81    |
| 4    | 29/30    | 29/30 | 19/20 | 7/10   | 6/10  | 90    |
| 5    | 29/30    | 29/30 | 20/20 | 9/10   | 8/10  | 95    |

## Judge's Comments

- 1 Split fins and generally knocked about
- 2 A little too fat
- 3 Young fish with a lot of scale damage
- 4 Young fish with good condition and potential
- 5 A younger synspilum but in excellent condition

Popular Choice Trophy went to Dale Berry for his Uaru, by only one vote.

I would like to apologise for the error in last month's edition, for tank No. 5: total points should have read 86 points instead of 79.

Aart



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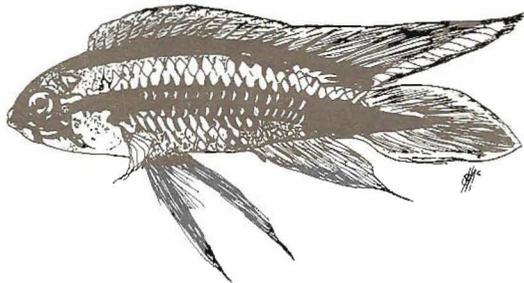
# CICHLID SCENE

**NEXT MEETING** will be held on August 19th at the Ashburton Primary School, Fakenham Road, at 8.00 pm. Supper will be held after the meeting, all visitors are most welcome.

- MINI TALK** Fish of the Month  
"Julidochromis"  
- Steve Butcher
- MAIN TALK** "Discus"  
- Colin Parbery
- DOOR PRIZES** Kindly supplied by M.A.S. Imports
- DRAW PRIZES**
1. Eheim 2009 Power Filter
  2. Wine
  3. Pot plant
- TABLE SHOW** Dwarfs

## CLASSIFIEDS

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must be true strain  
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# Invite a friend to join the Society

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## **FEES:**

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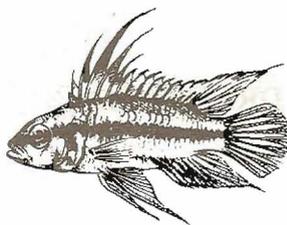
Ordinary membership . . . \$12.00 Joining fee \$5.00.  
Family membership . . . . \$13.00  
Junior membership . . . . \$7.00 No joining fee.  
Overseas membership . . . \$A12.00 Plus handling charges.

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## **APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**

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The Secretary,  
Graham Rowe,  
The Victorian Cichlid Society  
Incorporated,  
23 Mangana Drive,  
MULGRAVE, AUSTRALIA 3170.



*Dear Graham,*

*I wish to become a member of the Victorian Cichlid Society Incorporated. Herewith I have included the required information, and I enclose a cheque for the correct amount.*

Name in full: .....

Age next birthday (if under-18): .....

Address: .....

.....

Postcode: ..... Telephone: .....

Date: ..... Signature: .....

Area/s of interest: .....

.....

.....

Nominated by: .....

Seconded by: .....