

## **Bettas Return to Canada**

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## **Plants for Killifish**

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## ***Astatotilapia flavii* josephi**

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## **Endler's Livebearer**

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**Photo by Greg Steeves**

We want to thank all of the contributors to this issue of Fish Tales. Photos were contributed by Morgan Ruttle, Diana Johansen, Ronald Marcos, Greg Steeves and Mike Wickham. I also want to thank Brandon O'Brian for his first article and hope to see many more to come.

#### **Design and Layout**

**Gerald Griffin**



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# Bettas Return to Canada! First BBC Show



**Gerald Griffin**

I am currently the President of the International Beta Congress as well as the chair of the Species Maintenance Program, Color Conservation Chair and Co-Chair of the Education Committee of the IBC. I am also involved in my Local Aquarium Association serving as the President and BAP chair of the Oklahoma Aquarium, the Treasurer for the American Labyrinth Fishes Association and also the President of the Oklahoma Beta Breeders Association.

I published my first article in FLARE! Magazine in 1986 and have been writing ever since and running small club publications and newsletters. I know that we still have a lot to learn about many species reproductive biology and firmly believe that the hobbyist can make a great impact on Species Conservation.

**O**ur flight landed at 3:30 pm at the Buffalo Airport on Thursday. It was not long before we found Catherine and Heather and were on the road by 4:00 pm. Kayla and I were eager to test out our new Passport Cards entering Canada. This would be our first adventure outside of the United States together. It was along the way that I discovered Canada's greatest invention, Tim Horton's! Timmy's would be an important factor in getting me through the weekend and seldom would you find me without a cup of Timmy's. We made it back to the hotel room in time to settle in and grab a quick bite before heading to the Hamilton and Hamilton District Aquarium Society's meeting Thursday night. The meeting was laid back and it was a "meeting of the experts". It was there we met Peter DeSouza and Jessica Bullock among others. We had a number of great discussions about various types of fish and after a while the focus of the meeting went to Bettas and about the show that would be starting

on Friday. After the meeting we went out to eat with a group of the hard core members and discussed more fish stuff and got to know our Canadian Comrades a little better. After that whirlwind day we called it a night and went back to the hotel.

Friday Morning Kayla was rearing to go while I had almost nothing to do. We went down to the show room and advised on the setup. Kayla had set up the registration center and Peter had brought the stands in and then we finally were able to get going on the setup. Catherine had to make another airport run to pick up Larissa Williams so we continued looking at how we wanted to get the Beta Show set up. After a little reorganization of the show room tables we had the stands set up and got the background set. Kayla worked on the lineup of background and then we had to tape it into place. After a break for lunch the fish started to arrive so I had to leave the Beta Show Room and then went over to the general show room and

watched the set up of their exhibits. Like always I saw a lot of fish I wanted to take home but I knew that we would not have the room to take anything home anyway. Some of my favorites were the blue gularis and some montie swords. The sales room was beginning to take shape and I got to visit with some of those vendors as well. Something I found amazing was the Canadian hospitality; I had never been to a fish event where everyone I met and talked to was pleasant.

Catherine rolled in with Larissa and had Timmy's in hand so I was set for my talk. My first talk was on Wild Betta species and the lecture room was totally packed. I was able to get through all my slides and to the end in time for some questions and there were a lot of questions. I am glad when I am able to give my talk and eliminate so many common misconceptions people have about Wild Betta Species. After my talk I was also thanked by a number of people who had read my articles and actually understood what I was



Kayla is showing Morgan Ruttle how to do the data entries for shows.

talking about wild Betta husbandry. After my talk the show room had been totally set up and all of the Bettas were benched. Larissa and I were now able to enter and answer questions. We were looking at the possible combine/split procedures that we will be implementing in Area 1 and were looking at doing a trial run in this Canadian District Show.

After a quick run through we went to dinner and shut the show room down for the night. We met at Swiss Chalet and had another meal with Betta friends discussing all sorts of Betta topics. Few things actually beat the fellowship of Betta friends over a meal. After the dinner we went to Wal Mart to pick up some things we might need and then headed back to the hotel.



Ann Marie Towell filling containers prior to benching the Bettas.

The next morning we were set to do Judging and were told that the Judging had been post ponned until mid afternoon. We did have some C.A.O.A.C. judges who wanted to observe the Betta judging to see how the IBC did judging. So we held until after my second talk on Betta Genetics. Again I had another packed house of people wanting to get a basic understanding of the topic. . It is nice to be able to do one of these talks and reference the fish in the show room. With the ability to see live examples it makes the understanding quite a bit easier. Again there were a multitude of questions and discussions and many in attendance was amazed at the sheer variety that Domestic



Haydn and Ann are looking at prospective breeders.

Bettas come in. After the talk some of the attendees made their way to the show room to see what I was talking about and we fielded the questions of the attendees. It was a great time and great to show off the accomplishment of the Canadian Betta Breeders.

After lunch Larissa and I started judging. We each had people in tow as runners and assistants. We then started breaking classes apart using logical break points and some of the classes were sub-divided in thirds. This was great seeing so many entries in these classes. The fish that were on show were as good as any in Area 1 and a number were truly spectacular. Some of the C.A.O.A.C. judges were astonished at the level of detail we went to in the judging as their judging the all species took about an hour, we were in the 4 hour mark and still going. We took a break as our assistants set up the best of variety and this is when the real schooling took place. Larissa and I then had them go through the fish and decide which they thought should be the show winners and not with their

justifications. After which Larissa and I went over which ones win and explained why. They did pretty good picking the winners. It is nice to see so many people interested in Betta shows in Canada.

The banquet as always was great. Fantastic food and one of my favorite speakers gave the banquet talk, Ray "Kingfish" Lucas. Ray is without a doubt one of my favorite

speakers and fish people. I love seeing his humor and his reverence for the hobby. He is quite remarkable and has the distinction of being the only American that was ever President of C.A.O.A.C. One thing that was quite remarkable was the BBC Cake. That cake was a piece of art! In a way it was a shame to cut it but as a cake it was destined to be eaten. After the funfair of the banquet we packed up and called it a night after much discussion on fish things.

The next morning I attended the C.A.O.A.C. business meeting as I love to see how other clubs and organization handle business is of interest to me since I am a member of so many fish organizations. After the meeting was over we got to set up for the Betta Auction. Haydn Pounder and Ann Marie Towell were the auctioneers and they took turns auctioning off the Bettas. That is something I had never seen before as we have always had one auctioneer at a time and switch them at hour intervals.



The art entries for the show. There was quite a variety at this show.

The auction did last longer than I thought it was but some of those fish were getting some good prices as new people were getting into Breeding Bettas in Canada. I loved seeing the excitement on their faces as they won the Bettas they wanted. After the auction we were able to relax and see what was left of the C.A.O.A.C. show and auction. After more discussion with our new fish friends the Betta Breeders Canada club went to dinner. At dinner again we had even more fellowship of our fellow Betta Breeders. After dinner we finally had the chance to unwind in the hot tub. Larissa, Morgan, Kayla and I finally had a chance to relax and discuss the events of the last three days. We all agreed that this Betta show was a fantastic success and was long overdue! It was enjoyable to see so many people working together for a common cause. After an hour or so it was finally time to hit the bed and get ready for our final adventure.

Monday morning Catherine picked



The BBC Cake was a work of art on its own. We had a hard time when it actually came to cutting the cake.

up Larissa, Kayla and myself for our trip to Niagara Falls. After another Timmy's run we were headed to the Canadian side of the Falls. The Canadian side is without doubt the best side of the Falls to view from. We posed for many pictures and walked along the barrier taking pictures every so many feet.

It was a fantastic day and Kayla and I got a number of shots of us as well as shots with Catherine and Larissa. Our biggest regret was not having enough time to see more of Canada on this trip. There were so many things we would have loved to see but we will have to save this for the Next Canadian Betta Show!

Photos by Gerald and Kayla Griffin.

Photos on the next two pages by Morgan Ruttle and Diana Johansen.

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Ron Bishop presenting awards to the presentors at the C.O.A.O.C. Convention. Left to Right Bob Fenner, Gerald Griffin, Ron Bishop, Ray Lucas and Rachel O'Leary.



Haydn Pounder posing with the BBC Banner. Photo by Morgan Ruttle



Larissa Williams explaining the judging process to Ashley Rezka. Photo by Morgan Ruttle

Below - Kayla doing the honors of cutting the BBC Cake. Photo by Diana Johansen





Ann Marie Towell and Ashley Rezka auctioning off some Wild Bettas. Photo by Diana Johansen



Narrowing down the competition to the Best and Reserve Best of Shows. Photo by Morgan Ruttle



BBC President Catherine Salmon presenting Larissa Williams with an award. Photo by Diana Johansen



Ashley Rezka being presented a Best of Show Ribbon from Morgan Ruttle. Photo by Diana Johansen



Peter DeSouza being presented a Best of Show Ribbon from Morgan Ruttle. Photo by Diana Johansen



Some of the show winners. Photo by Diana Johansen



# *Astatotilapia flavijosephi*



Photos by Greg Steeves



Greg Steeves

I started maintaining haplochromine cichlids over 20 years ago and they remain my passion to this day. Collectively, the Steeves' have bred more than 150 species of fish, the majority being African cichlids. When I moved to Texas from Canada, I helped form the Hill Country Cichlid Club and in recent years, taken on the presidency of the Federation of Texas Aquarium Societies. I am fortunate to be invited to speak regularly at organizations across North America on Haplochromine cichlids and Texas Natives. I've written for many magazines around the world that have been translated into twelve different languages (I've been counting). I have written three books which I am very proud of. Lee Ann and I truly enjoy attending fish conventions and seeing old and new friends, the element that makes this hobby the best in the world!

Although I have had the opportunity to work with many amazing haplochromine cichlids, there are some that I have all but given up on ever maintaining. For many of these fish, their very existence is questionable due to environmental stressors. Others are just tough to come by never having been introduced into the aquatic hobby. Years ago when I learned of *Astatotilapia flavijosephi*, I had placed this cichlid at the top of my want list. I really had little idea of what it looked like, its temperament or anything else about it. What I was intrigued by was the lack of information available. (Scientific journals dealing with distribution, but little that would be of interest to the aquarist) and the fact that it is the only haplochromine cichlid whose natural range is not in the continent of Africa.

Recent populations of *Astatotilapia flavijosephi* have been confirmed in Syria and Israel, however earlier widespread habitats were found throughout the Jordan River system

(Werner and Mokady 2004). The question persists; how did this fish become established in the Middle East?

There are six endemic cichlids species in Israel. All are genetically linked to African ancestry. The first migration is thought to have brought the descendants of *Astatotilapia flavijosephi*, *Tristramella sacra* and *Tristramella simonis*. These fish migrated over The Levant, a bridge between three continents connecting the African and Eurasian plates (Tchernov, 1988; Por, 1989; Goren & Ortal, 1999). This connected Africa and Arabia during the Miocene era. A more recent migration derived from the Nile and sub-Saharan Africa is *Oreochromis aureus*, *Sarotherodon galileus*, and *Tilapia zilli* (Tchernov, 1988, Por, 1989, Goren & Ortal, 1999). No evidence of haplochromine cichlids emerging from the Nile to the Israeli River System after separation of the Levant has presented itself. So in summary, *Astatotilapia flavijosephi* emerged from North African ancestry ap

proximately three million years ago, traveling to Israel along freshwater estuaries crossing the Levant, a land bridge that no longer exists. Tectonic movement has today isolated the two regions.

As the lone representative of a large assemblage of haplochromine cichlids outside of Africa, it comes as no surprise that the closest relative of *Astatotilapia flavijosephi*, is the northern most African species *Astatotilapia desfontainii* (Loiselle and Kaufman pers comm.) In terms of husbandry and captive maintenance, I have based my care of *A. flavijosephi* on my successes with *A. desfontainii*.

Fully adult males reach a size of 13cm while the females stay slightly smaller. A unique feature of this species is that pharyngeal dentition differs between the sexes. “The median teeth are molariform in males, slender and blade-like in females and juveniles” – Paul Loiselle. It is generally found in shallow waters among vegetated growth. Males feed mainly on snails whist females



A male *Astatotilapia flavijosephi* hanging out in front of the rockwork.

and juveniles feed mostly on small insets and larvae (Krupp and Schneider, 1989). There exist a small number of isolated populations which could be considered subspecies. These groups are all restricted to the Jordan River System with recorded populations in Israel and Syria at the waters surrounding Lake Kinneret (Sea of Galilee), The Baisan Valley, and Lake Muzairib and Lake Tiberias. Interestingly,

both riverine and lacustrine populations of *A. flavijosephi* exist.

The population I am working with originated at a location known today as the Hakibbutzim Stream Nature Reserve in Israel. This is a heavily vegetated stream. It has since become a highly protected area and, as such, hopefully a stronghold for this amazing cichlid for years to come.



A pair of *Astatotilapia flavijosephi* starring the spawning dance.

I am truly fortunate to have wonderful friends all over the world. Anyone who knows me knows well my attraction to the haplochromine type cichlids. I count myself extremely privileged to have such great people always in the hunt for a new species for me to try.

Perhaps one of the greatest international fish ambassadors in recent years is my friend Dr. Anton Lamboj. There is no way I could possibly give him the acknowledgment he deserves for introducing so many beautiful cichlids into the aquarium hobby. It was through Anton that I was able to acquire *A. flavijosephi*. On a visit in



*Astatotilapia flavijosephi* pair.

August of 2009, with a large smile, Anton presented me with five *A. flavijosephi* of slightly over 1 cm in size. Once they settled in to their prepared aquaria, growth was rapid and the biggest, a male, began to color. These fish are a basic tan-silver coloration with twelve faint vertical bars crossing the flanks. Fins are transparent. Dominant male coloration is spectacular! The entire underside is jet-black as are the pelvic fins. Two or three large orange egg spots adorn the anal fin. These ocelli cross the fin rays. The bottom lip is bright blue. A black bar begins at the top of the eye socket and continues downward past the corner of the mouth and merging with the black of the throat. The base coloration of the head is tan while the body is a similar coloration with a slight reddish tinge. Beginning around the pectoral socket and continuing rearward towards the caudal peduncle is an orange splotched area. This coloration is restricted to the abdomen. Dark blotching along the flanks occurs in both sexes when stressed. The male overall is a much darker

fish than the female.

The manner in which I fashioned the aquarium used to house *A. flavijosephi* was rather simple. I do enjoy my aquariums to be ascetically pleasing so limited aquascaping was employed. First the tank was a small 29 gallon bow front. This was meant to be a grow-out tank and my intention was to move the fish once they got larger. I hadn't

expected to have a successful spawning from such small fish. An aquaclear power filter coupled with bi weekly water changes maintained pristine water quality. A small piece of driftwood with several sprigs of *Anubias nana* attached provided a centerpiece. Two larger rocks were situated to one side. The substrate was light pool filter sand. These simple elements seemed to be all that was necessary to allow the fish comfort enough to grow and spawn.

As with all haplochromines (with the possible exception of evolving biparental brooding) *A. flavijosephi* is a maternal mouth brooder with the female gestating her developing young for 17 days at 82° F. The courting male excavates a pit at the base of a rock and it is here that the act of spawning occurs. He entices a ripe female with a series of "shimmies" and eventually, the circling spawning procedure takes place. After spawning, the male has nothing else to do with the female and she is on her own. The female will try to find a calm spot



A male *Astatotilapia flavijosephi* displaying to a female.

which to brood and tumble her developing young. For two days post release, the mother will continue to allow the free swimming fry into her buccal cavity. After this time, the female will continue to protect the area around her fry but will not allow, despite her fry's best attempts, them back into her mouth. Brood care and fry size is typical of other haplochromine cichlids. In its native waters, *A. flavijosephi* is a seasonal spawning species with a breeding period lasting April to July.

Based on the most recent assessment by the IUCN, *Astatotilapia flavijosephi* is regarded as endangered citing a restricted range and population decline due to pollution and drought. This is especially prevalent in riverine populations while drought induced lake level fluctuations are the largest threat to lacustrine habitat.

What a shame it has been for the cichlid hobby that this fish has yet to find a home in our tanks. It is highly attractive species and easily



A female *Astatotilapia flavijosephi* holding fry.

adaptable to our artificial environments. *Astatotilapia flavijosephi* has quickly become one of my favorite cichlid species. I hope to someday acquire a different population for comparison reasons but in the meantime, with a little bit of luck, young from my small group will be distributed to other hobbyists in an attempt to establish healthy groups of this rare cichlid in our aquariums.



A young male *Astatotilapia flavijosephi* cruising the rockwork.

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Photos by Greg Steeves

# Aquatic Plants for Killifish

Photos by Greg Steeves



Doug Austin

I am 61 years old and been keeping fish on and off since I was about 10. I have been married to my wife Josie for 30 years and we have a 25 year old daughter Carmen. My 1st tank was a ten gallon community tank that included at least one pair of swordtails and a live plants. I have a long history of keeping live plants in my tanks. In the 80's I started keeping African Cichlids. I like their colors and they like the hard water we have in this part of the county. That was when I joined the Houston Aquarium Society and the Texas Area Killifish Organization. Some of us also tried to start the Southeast Texas Chapter of the Texas Cichlid Association. I became editor for the HAS in the late 80's and early 90's. This gave me a soft spot for Aquarium club editors.

As many of you know I like planted tanks. Many Killifish people still think they should stick with the Java plants: Java Fern and Java Moss. In fact there are many truly aquatic plants that don't need expensive lighting, special CO<sub>2</sub> systems and advanced knowledge of fertilizers.

So here is a brief on plants that use low to medium light and can get by without special ferts or CO<sub>2</sub>.

## Moss

When I first got into aquatic plants, the moss group started and ended with Java Moss, *Taxiphyllum barbieri*. Now there are a number of moss species being kept in planted tanks. Java Moss can grow in a clump on the bottom of the tank or attached to wood or rock.

Aquatic plant people do not keep up with the scientific names of their species as much as Killifish people. And that is an understatement. One Aquatic plant person who knows

the scientific names of plants is TFH's Amanda Wagner. Even she does not know the scientific names of mosses well. There is much confusion regarding the mosses.

The second moss I wish to discuss is the Christmas Tree Moss, *Vesicularia montagnei*. Christmas Tree Moss has a more ragged look than Java Moss, with fonds that look like little Christmas trees. This species is easy to grow and is now my favorite moss.

Singapore moss is *Vesicularia dubyana*. Interesting that this was the name used for the Java Moss back when I was the Houston Aquarium Society BAP/HAP chairperson.

Next up is Willow Moss, *Fontinalis antipyretica*. This species will attaches to wood and rock more rapidly and will have a growing pattern that reaces down from what it is attached to. Some species of *Fontinalis* like cool water under 70 degrees.



African *bolbitis* is a more recent introduction that aquarists are beginning to favor.

Several species of *Fissidens* go by the name of Phoenix moss. *Fissidens fontanus* is a US native.

You can find mosses with different growth patterns, that come in different colors and most are easy to grow.

### Epiphytes

Epiphytes are plants that grow attached to things like wood or rock. A good example of an epiphyte plant is the old Killi tank stand by Java Fern, *Microsorium pteropus*. Java Fern is a fern but the leaves do not look fern like. Still this is a versatile easy to grow low light plant.

In recent years a number of cultivars have come on the market with differently shaped leaves. Some have long leaves, crinkle and other types. The best of the new cultivars is called Java Fern “Windelov”.

Another epiphyte aquatic fern is *Bolbitis heudelotii*. This species is from Africa and the leaves look like Fish Tales | 14

fern leaves. Most strains of *Bolbitis* grow too big for small aquariums. There is a *Bolbitis heudelotii* Mini and other species of *Bolbitis* show up from time to time.

*Anubias barteri* is also from Africa and could be the most popular epiphyte aquatic plant there is. *A.*

*barteri* has three sub species: *Barteri*, *nana*, and *congoense*. The *nana* sub species comes in variegated, yellow and mini forms besides the normal wild type. There are other species of *Anubias* available in the hobby.

*Bucephalandra* is a genus of plants from the island of Borneo that comes in different leaf colors and will bloom under water. Some aquatic plant people think of “Buces” as the new *Anubias*.

### Attaching Epiphytes and Mosses

Now you are dedicating your tank and you want to attach plants to your drift wood. What is the best technique? You have three basic choices. You can use something permanent like rubber bands or fishing line. When the plant is firmly attached, cut the rubber band or fishing line off.

The second technique is to attach the plant with something that will



*Cryptocornes* are gaining in popularity as a medium light plant that is easy to keep.

dissolve in water. Thread that is 100% cotton is the best choice here. This technique is popular for attaching mosses.

The third technique is to glue the plant to the surface. With this choice used Super Glue Gel.

### Leafy Plants and Stem Plants

Leafy Plants have big leaves and make good mid ground plants. Most stem plants have small leaves and grow tall. They often make good background plants serving a dual purpose of being a good place for baby fish to hide, and creating a sense of depth.

*Aponogeton* is a genus of plants that grove from bulbs. Some go thru a dormant stage during the cold months. *Aponogeton undulatus* is a species that can grow in low to medium light. Back in the day you could get big Mystery bulbs for \$0.50. They would grow to the top of the aquarium and bloom.



Java Moss has been a mainstay for Aquarists for many years.

*Cryptocoryne* has to be the most popular genus of water plants. Most come from the rain forest and grow in the shade. Easy to grow Cryts are *C. wendtii*, *C. balansae*, *C. beckettii* and *C. lucens*. I have been keeping the bronze form of *C. wendtii* for over twenty years.

Amazon sword plants of the genus *Echinodorus* are another good choice. I really like the Oselot sword with its spotted leaves. The first stem plant I will mention is Water Wisteria, *Hygrophila polysperma*. Unlike most stem plants Water Wisteria has big oak shaped leaves. This will contrast well with other plants.



Willow Moss is increasing in popularity as it is more widely available now.

Most stem plants need ferts and lots of light. The following are big exceptions: *Anacharis*, *Elodea Canadensis*, Guppy grass, *Najas guadalupensis* and *Rotala rotundifolia*.

*Anacharis* was my first plant and grew just fine. Guppy grass almost took over my guppy tank, and I would not recommend putting it in your pond, because it will take over.

I hope this is helpful to those who want to start with plants. And for people who have lots of fish only tanks, you can do a beautiful tank for the living room by using easy plants.

# The Endler's Livebearer



Brandon O'Brian

I have a passion for Livebearing species with my favorites being the *Poecilia* and *Micropoecilia* genera. I also love Killifish, with my favorite species being *Fundulopanchax gardneri*. I have kept many species in the *Fundulopanchax* and *Aphyosemion* genera. I also have a pretty big interest in wild bettas.

I plan to keep and preserve various wild type livebearing species, whatever I can get my hands on. Not only is the goal to preserve wild livebearers, but I also want to get them out from the shadows, and offer them to local fish shops that normally can't get them. I want to make them more available for everyone in the hobby. I don't want to do this for me, I want to do this for everyone in the aquarium hobby! Unfortunately, I have to put the project on hold due to a lack of funds. I'm also getting a new Houston area livebearer club going, which is the Houston Livebearer Club.

Ah! The Endler's Livebearer! Not only is the Endler's Livebearer my favorite fish species, it's also my favorite livebearer. This fish is definitely a true wonder. There are many, MANY naturally occurring strains of this species, from the Black Bar Endler, to the El Tigre Endler. This one species is definitely a world of its own! Believe me, you can get lost with this species! Regardless of the strain, the care for them is extremely easy and fun!

Before I get started, there are a few things you need to know about Endler's Livebearers. First, they are divided into three classes: N class, P class and K class. N class Endler's are any Endler that can be documented to the original source from where they were originally caught. They are pure strain Endler's and have not hybridized with any similar species. P class Endler's are any Endler that looks like it's N class, but it has no documentation proving it's N class. Without the documentation, it's impossible to know if the fish is N class or not. Some P class Endler's could even be hybrids. A K class Endler is any Endler that definitely has signs of

hybridization, like the Tiger Endler. A hybrid Endler is usually a cross between an Endler with a Guppy (*Poecilia reticulata*). While P and K class Endler's can be real nice, do your best to get N class Endler's, especially if you plan to preserve a specific strain or population.

Another thing, Endler's Livebearers are closely related to the Guppy (*Poecilia reticulata*), because of this, mixing the two species will cause them to hybridize, ruining both species. To avoid this, keep each species in their own tank. Keep them away from any species in the *Poecilia* and *Micropoecilia*. Keep each strain of Endler in their own tank, unless you want to create a new strain. If you do want to create your own strain, be sure to only use N class Endler's.

Now that I got that boring blah blah stuff out of the way, we can finally move on to their care! As you will see, they are extremely easy to care for.

## Setup and Maintenance

Endler's Livebearers are a tiny



with males getting around 1.5 inches long, maybe more. Females get around 2 to 2.5 inches long. You can keep a good sized colony (four males and six females) in a ten gallon. They are a beautiful and active species, so they are always entertaining to see. While they aren't picky when it comes to tank setups, they will look best in a planted setup. However they will be fine in any setup. They aren't too picky when it comes to water flow, as long as it isn't too strong. Be careful when it comes to filtration, since they can be small enough to get sucked up into the intake, depending on the filter. They can, and will jump into hang-on back filter, so be careful when using one. Mine usually jump right out on their own. As I have just said, they are jumpers, so make sure the tank is covered, and be sure to leave no openings! They aren't too picky when it comes to water quality, as long as the water isn't too soft and acidic. They are pretty adaptable overall. They will eat anything given to them, from flakes and dried foods, to live and frozen foods. Even wild caught Endler's (if you can get them), will immediately eat what's given to them. This species isn't picky at all!



A Tiger Endler which is gaining in popularity with the livebearing community.

### Compatibility and Behavior

Endler's Livebearers are a small species, so make sure you don't add any other species that can eat them. They are peaceful, and can get along with most other peaceful species in the hobby. As I stated before, never mix them with any species in the *Poecilia* and *Micropoecilia* genera, since hybridization can occur. Overall, Endler's aren't too fussy when it comes to tankmates. Make sure you have at least two females

to every male, since the males will relentlessly pursue the females, trying to get some action. The males are horny little guys. Endler's breed like rats, so you'll have a population in no time! They usually don't eat their fry, but they can be eaten by other tankmates. If you are breeding them, make sure the fry can't get near the filter's intake. This is no problem if you are using a sponge filter. Also, keep a ton of plants in the tanks with fry, so they can have somewhere to hide.

### Conclusion

Overall, the Endler's Livebearer is an extremely easy fish to keep! In fact, it's easier than keeping a Guppy! There are many beautiful strains to choose from too! It's small, beautiful, easy to keep, and extremely active! Once you lay eyes on them, you'll quickly see why they are my favorite fish species. Did I mention they are fairly cheap? Well, quit reading this article and go get some Endler's! If you have any questions feel to contact me!



A more wild looking bottom sword Endler.



Pure wild strain Endler's. Photos top and bottom by Mike Wickham.





Top: Blonde Endler males. Photo by Greg Steeves

Bottom: A typical Guppy x Endler Hybrid. Photo by Ronald Marcos



# **FOTAS 2015**

**September 25th - 27th**

**Hilton Garden Inn DFW South**

**2001 Valley View Lane**

**Irving Texas 75061**

**972-313-2800**

## **Speaker Lineup**

**Barbie Fiorentino, Luiz Rulff and Gerald Griffin**

## **Fish Shows**

**Cichlid, Killifish, Bettas and All Species Show**

**Pizza Party Banquet with Greg Steeves and the famous  
funny money auction!**

**Not to mention the Awesome Sunday Auction!**

**All this for \$10 to attend, \$10 for the Banquet Auction,  
FOTAS T-Shirts can be ordered on the Registration Form  
that will come out shortly.**

## **Special room rate of:**

**\$88.99 for a single King Room, and \$99.99 for a double**

**Auction Rule Changes: We are lowering the "move up fee" from \$3.00 to \$2.00. This does not guarantee you will win the bidding, but does allow you to be sure the item sells before you need to leave. Of course to win the big raffle tank you need to be present at the end of the auction when the winning number is drawn.**

**Please call the hotel directly at 972-313-2800 to reserve your room. These rates will be honored from Thursday, 9/24 through Sunday night, 9/27, as long as your reservation is made by September 4th. Mention TCA when you make your reservation.**



# AQUATIC SWAP MEET



**Schertz Community Center  
1400 Schertz Parkway  
Schertz, Texas 78154**

Sunday August 23rd, 2015

Noon until 4PM

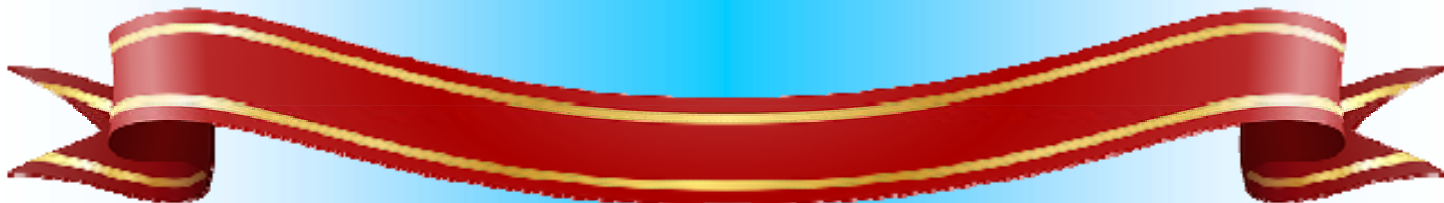
**Admission is FREE!!!**

Aquarium Equipment, Live Fish,  
Live Plants, Inverts

For information on acquiring a table, contact  
Greg at [gasteeves@gmail.com](mailto:gasteeves@gmail.com). Table rental is \$10.00 per  
table and given out on a first come first served basis.

Fee collected at the Swap.

Doors open for sellers to set up at 10:00 AM



THE HILL COUNTRY CICHLID CLUB PRESENTS  
THE 2016

# AQUATIC RENDEZVOUS

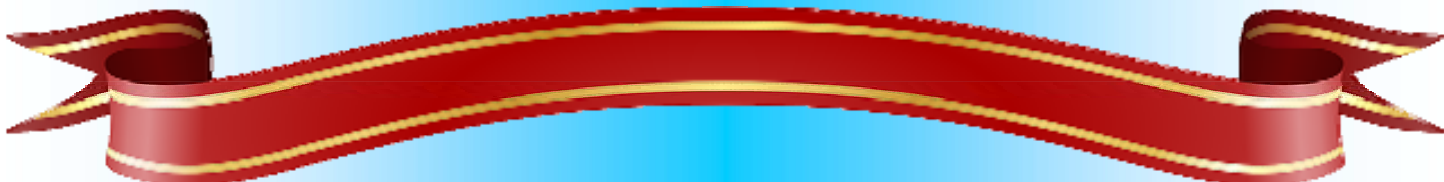
A gathering of Aquarists for a weekend of fish and fun  
Shows and Exhibitions February 6th & 7th 2016

Bluebonnet Hall  
1400 Schertz Parkway  
Schertz, Texas 78154

*Aquatic Photography Exhibit and Contest,  
Live Aquatic Plant Bowl Show,  
Pizza Party, Famous HCCC No Money Auction,  
Sunday all things aquatic Mega Auction and Catfish Raffle.*

*Special guest of honor, Ad Konings.*

## MORE TO COME!!





## **FOTAS Betta Show**

**September 26, 2015**  
**Location: Hilton Gardens Inn,**  
**Irving, Texas**



**Mail Entries to:**  
**Lori Green**  
**P.O. Box 1240**  
**Midlothian, Texas 76065**

**Judges: Wally Nida – Head Judge**  
**Kayla Griffin, Gerald Griffin, ♦♦Igor Prpic**  
**Apprentices: Lori Green, Joe Green**

♦♦**Show Chair: Tonya Garrison, Email: [tonya.garrison@gmail.com](mailto:tonya.garrison@gmail.com)**

**\*\*IMPORTANT\*\* ALL FISH MUST BE PREREGISTERED!!!**  
**Pre-Reg Entries must be received by 5 pm, Wednesday, September 23, 2015**  
**No Late Entries will be accepted.**

**Entries must arrive by 5 pm on Thursday, September 24, 2015.**  
**Please include: your completed entry form, return shipping label and or postage, enough bags for ALL your fish sent \*plus extras \*\*your extra bags will be returned\*\***  
**IF you do not send bags, we will provide at \$.25 a bag. Please provide heat packs also.**  
**We have heat packs for emergencies at \$2.00 each ((40 hr heat)).**  
**\*\*Please Note - boxes over a certain weight can NOT be sent using stamps\*\***

**FEES and RETURN POSTAGE will not be taken out of Auction Proceeds**  
**Any entries sent without return postage will be considered a donation to the club.**

**Entry Fees: Entry Fees for IBC members are \$2 for singles, \$3 for pairs with a limit of 50 entries**  
**For non-IBC members, the fees are \$4 per single entry and \$6 per pair with a limit of 10 entries**  
**for non-memers.**

**PayPal users: Please send entry fees via PayPal to [lonestarbettas@aol.com](mailto:lonestarbettas@aol.com). Please add a \$3 convenience fee.**

**Walk Ins are WELCOME!**  
**~No more than 10 fish for walk in please~**  
**All Walk-ins must arrive no later than 5 pm on Friday, September 25, 2015**

**Auction Fish**  
**Auction is being held by FOTAS**  
**Checks will be mailed from FOTAS/Host Club directly to seller.**  
**Money Split: 75% to Seller/ 25% to FOTAS**

**No Show results will be given over the phone or on FB.**  
**Official results will be posted on Better Bettas, then on IBC FaceBook page.**  
**♦♦indicates possible change**

**Previous Issue of Fish Tales**

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

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



# ***Fish Tales***

Vol 5 Issue 1

**Collecting Plecos in San Antonio**

Clay Trachtman

**5 Tips for Planted Tanks**

Chris Lewis

**IBC Species Maintenance  
Program Update**

Gerald Griffin

**South American Oddball Catfish**

Roy Williams