

# UnderWater



The Official Newsletter of the Iowa Aquaria Association

August 2005 | V2:N8



COVER: Salt Water Tank | by Jeff Shelton (jeff)

INSIDE: What is a species? | Lake Malawi: Darwin's Playground | The Congo Tetra



# UnderWater

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# UnderWater Welcome

Summer is typically a slower time in the aquarium hobby here in the Midwest. Hobbyists get distracted by the sudden appearance of the sun and tend to spend more of their leisure time outdoors and less in their fish-rooms and on the forum(s). Traffic on the IAA forum has reflected this. Many of the "old reliable" members still stop by daily and dispense knowledge and/or make stuff up.

Our August event is coming soon. Traditionally

there is a flurry of forum activity associated with events as everyone clamors to pre-arrange buys, sales and trades.

This event marks the beginning of "fishy" season. This one promises to be an exciting one as our club continues to grow in numbers and diversity. We have some very dedicated, knowledgeable and generous hobbyists in our ranks. Many are currently hard at work developing and/or fine-tuning our photo contest, Breeder Award

Program, website, show/contest, meeting agenda and, of course, this newsletter. Thanks to all of you. This event is shaping up to be action-packed.

While a few of our us are temporarily "Gone Fishing" I look forward to seeing many of them surface on the forum and at the meeting in a few weeks.

**Scott Carlson**  
(fishwhisperer)  
IAA President

Putter | Magnet | Organic Cotton Tee | Value T-Shirt | Jr. Ringer T-shirt |  
 Women's T-Shirt | Dog T-Shirt | Jr. Raglan | Jr. Hoodie |  
 T-Shirt | Men's T-Shirt | Dog T-Shirt | Jr. Raglan | Jr. Hoodie |  
 o G | D | Jersey | White T-Shirt | Ash Grey T-Shirt |  
 Sh | All T-Shirt | Women's T-Shirt |  
 pe | T-shirt | Sweatshirt | Boxer Shorts |  
 Classic Money | Camisole | Infant, Toddler T-Shirt | Infant Creeper | Bib

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# UnderWater Photography Contest



Jeff Shelton (jeff)  
Firefish

1st  
PLACE



Bill Brown (manus)  
*Neolamprologus leleupi*  
Honorable Mention



Chad Lopez (orbital)  
*Aulonocara stuartgranti* "Ngara"  
Honorable Mention



Bill Brown (manus)  
*Cynotilapia afra*  
Honorable Mention

**August 20th is next month's photo submission deadline.**

## THE AFRICAN RIFT LAKES, PART 2

# LAKE MALAWI: Darwin's Playground

Nestled between Malawi, Mozambique, and Tanzania, Lake Malawi is the third largest lake in Africa. The lake is about 600 km long, and 80 km wide in some parts, covering approximately 31,000 square kilometers. Reaching depths over 700 m, Lake Malawi is the ninth largest lake in the world, as well as the fourth deepest. It is also believed to be one of the oldest lakes on the planet. While the experts have not come up with an exact date, the most recent approximations assume the lake to be between 3-20 million years old.

The waters of Lake Malawi have continuously risen

of sediment in its bottom since then. It is believed that the sediment resting at the bottom of Lake Malawi is over four kilometers deep. This thick accumulation of sediment is why researchers believe the lake to be as old as they do. Lake Malawi reached its highest levels in August of 1980, and since then has visibly dropped by several meters, although the lake is currently rising again.

It is this constant change that has given rise to Lake Malawi's most interesting feature, the lake's biomass. The waters of Malawi have given birth to some of the most diverse fish found in any single body of water.

although the most exciting of the fish in Malawi are its Cichlids.

The Cichlid family of Lake Malawi has seen some 1,500 variations in the last

affecting the evolution of Lake Malawi's cichlids, competition for food, and geographical isolation are among the most important. In the constant search for food the cich-



**Labidochromis sp. Perlmutter, by sosnarfy**



**Cynotilapia Afra "Lumbila" - photo by manus**

and fallen throughout its lifetime. Evidence shows that the lake stood a full 400 meters shallower 25,000 years ago than it currently stands. The Lake has also witnessed the accumulation of 40 meters

Lake Malawi contains almost 1,000 species of fish, more than Europe and North America combined. Among some of these fish are catfish, minnows, killifish, a true, ocean-faring eel, and spiny eels,

ten millions years, all related to a single, common ancestor. Within the last two million years the lake has seen over 700 species of cichlids evolve. Ad Konings suggests that there are 850 or more known species in the lake today with another 250-300 more awaiting discovery. This amazing number of species has given Lake Malawi the nickname of "Darwin's Playground", but what is the cause of the high-speed evolution of so many species?

Of the many forces at work

lids of Lake Malawi have evolved some remarkable ways of feeding. Ranging from specialized teeth and camouflage to extravagant hunting behaviors, the cichlids of Malawi have filled niches very similar to that of marine fishes.

Intense competition for food has caused the cichlids of Lake Malawi to become very specialized in the ways they feed. Some of the rock dwelling fish, known as Mbuna, have developed broad, comb-like teeth they use to rake the algae from

# LAKE MALAWI: Darwin's Playground

rocks. These Mbuna aren't specifically after the algae, but are instead combing microorganisms from it. A species known as *Labeotropheus* has gone a step further and developed a callused chin and nose that it uses as a fulcrum to tear algae away from the rocks. Another Mbuna, *Cynotilapia*, has developed more conical shaped teeth that are used for catching free-swimming plankton in the water column.

Not to be out done by the Mbuna, the larger Haplochromines have also evolved some specialized ways of sustaining themselves. A group informally known as "Rubber" or "Thick" lipped cichlids have formed fleshy, callused lips. These cichlids, like *Chilotilapia Euchiilus*, or *Protomelas* sp. "mbenji thick lip" press their thickened mouths against cracks and nooks in the rocks. The lips seal off the area of interest, allowing the fish to use its mouth as a vacuum, sucking out the inhabitants. Other fish such as, *Chilotilapia Rhoadesii*, and *Trematocranus Placodon* have discovered a way to dine on snails. The *Rhoadesii* simply crushes smaller shells, or sucks the inhabitants right out of the larger shells.

Another fish, *Genyochromis Mento*, mimics the cichlids of another genus,

*Oreochromis*. Fooling the *Oreochromis*, the *Gynochromis* gets in close enough to bite the *Oreochromis*, making off with a mouth full of scales, which it consumes.

There are even a few fish that have learned to exploit one the features most important to Malawi cichlids' survival... all Malawi cichlids are maternal mouth brooders. That means that a female cichlid will hold her spawn in her mouth as the eggs develop, not releasing them until they are free swimming. Fish like *Caprichromis Orthognathus* have learned to take full advantage of a female with a mouth full of eggs. These "baby-eaters" will ram into a holding mother from the sides or behind, causing her to release some of her fry. The defenseless fry then become an easy meal.

The use of camouflage is best represented by piscivore cichlids. For instance, *Dimidiochromis Compressiceps* has a laterally compressed body, and a dark stripe that runs along its dorsal. The *Compressiceps* make use of this by hunting in reeds with its head down, making it appear to be a reed itself. The most fascinating feeding habits, and use of camouflage, though, belong to *Nimbochromis Livingstonii*. The *Livingstonii* has a

blotched pattern consisting of brown and white, with displaying males attaining a blue coloration on top of that pattern. At feeding time the *Livingstonii* will turn to its brown and white coloration (Malawi cichlids have evolved to control their coloration

Malawi. It's known as Orange-Blotch, or O.B. This color pattern is found, in the wild, exclusively in Mbuna. O.B. markings consist of an orange body with black, or brown molted, blotches. Females tend to show this coloration much, much more than males.



**OB Zebra Mbenji, by cyclone cichlid**

to some degree), and lay on its side, motionless, on the substrate. Smaller fish, seeing the *Livingstonii* as a dead fish will sneak in and try to get an easy meal. It's the *Livingstonii* however, that gets the easy meal, for as the unsuspecting prey of the *Livingstonii* gets in close quarters, the *Livingstonii* makes its move.

Camouflage is also found in another form in Lake

There is a rare chance you will come across an O.B. male in the wild however. These O.B. males, known in the aquarium hobby as "Marmalade Cats", are quite attractive, and highly sought after. There is also a form of this pattern that lacks any blotches. It is known simply as the orange, or O. morph. Trying to imagine either color morph as effective camouflage can be a little

# What is a species?

Members of Iowa Aquaria Association (IAA) came together to share knowledge and entertainment through a forum, which is the heart of IAA. Many IAA members keep and enjoy cichlids. One reason is that cichlids enjoy a wide diversity of types or species. At least two threads on our forum have discussed "What is a species?"

Ichthyologists define a species by writing a description or "key". Many years ago, a key would contain mainly morphological or physical features. These days it is possible to add much more than simply morphological data to a key. Images of live fish and even behavior recorded on media may be placed in a key for later viewing. Those trained in sorting through the different characteristics that are placed in a key and assigning a fish to a genera and ultimately to a species are systematic special-

ists. When the scientist finds a fish that does not fit any known key, he/she will write a new key and assign the fish a new species name. In 2002, Tawil did just that for *Pseudotropheus sp. kingsizei*, Likoma. Note that fish with sp designation following the genera name have not been studied and have not been assigned a species. In the case of *Pseudotropheus sp. kingsizei*, *kingsizei* is the suggested species based on educated guess by who selects the name. Here is the Tawil abstract.

Tawil, P. 2002. Description de *Cynotilapia pulpican* n. sp. (Pisces, Teleostei, Cichlidae), nouvelle espèce du lac Malawi, avec remarques sur les genres

*Cynotilapia*, as well as *Microchromis zebroides* Johnson, 1975, type of its genus. Both have priority over *Maylandia* and *Metriaclima*, two taxa proposed



*Cynotilapia Pulpican*, photo by Chad Lopez

more recently to designate a group of streaked mbuna in replacement of *Pseudotropheus*, redefined by Trewavas (1983). The limits of this group being still badly defined, the genus

*Cynotilapia* is retained here for the new species.

*Cynotilapia*, *Microchromis*, *Maylandia* et *Metriaclima*. l'An Cichlidé 2: 72-82.

Description of a new species of mbuna collected in August 2001 and known for a long time amongst aquarists under different trade names, notably *Pseudotropheus sp. kingsizei*, Likoma in an existing key. The old key for *Cynotilapia* specified unicuspid teeth, if the fish did not have unicuspid teeth it was not *Cynotilapia*. Tawil has now opened a door by placing a fish with bicuspid teeth, *Pseudotropheus sp. kingsizei*, Likoma into *Cynotilapia*. As other ichthyologists study this paper they may come to accept it, resulting in more *Pseudotropheus sp.* being reassigned to

Tawil created a new species because he could find no place for *Pseudotropheus sp. kingsizei*, Likoma in an existing key. The old key for *Cynotilapia* specified unicuspid teeth, if the fish did not have unicuspid teeth it was not *Cynotilapia*. Tawil has now opened a door by placing a fish with bicuspid teeth, *Pseudotropheus sp. kingsizei*, Likoma into *Cynotilapia*. As other ichthyologists study this paper they may come to accept it, resulting in more *Pseudotropheus sp.* being reassigned to



*Cynotilapia Pulpican* female, photo by Chad Lopez

# What is a species?

Cynotilapia genera based on Tawil's new key. Or if a systematic specialist finds flaws in the paper, they will rewrite Tawil's Cynotilapia key but not until a new species is being described or the author proposes major changes to a number of genera.

This is the method of determining what is a valid species and where does it fit in the systematic of existing genera. Another approach is the use of DNA and molecular biology studies. A systematic approach to defining a species takes many hours of subject study to determine into which key the subject fits. DNA analysis will not replace the systematic approach but it can find relationships between species that the systematic approach may not find. DNA analysis consists of comparing pieces of DNA from the same DNA strand between two or more fish. If the two pieces are identical then the cichlids are closely related. If not then one or both strands contain mutations from their common ancestors.

## You can help!

Members of the American Cichlid Association may remember a recent article in Buntbarsche Bulletin (BB), #225, December 2004, titled "Cichlids in the Genomics Era: What can we learn about the genetic basis of their rapid speciation?" The authors Susan Renn and Nadia Aubin-Horth are aim-

ing to determine which genes and how many vary between species. They will look at 35,000 pieces of DNA from each fish. They hope to correlate the differences and or similarities with color, shape and behavior of the fish. The work may identify specific genes that control for color, shape and behavior. It will also demonstrate how closely related the fish in the study are related to each other. The aim of this article is to ask for our help. The research team needs genetic material from our fish. The request is for a piece of caudal fin about half the size of our smallest fingernail. The team states, "It is of great importance that these fish are pure breed without any history of hybridization, and because we do not care about the color or "quality" of the fish, a clipping from a less attractive fish would be suitable for our project. ... A list of the species in which we are interested follows. If you have any of these species and would be willing to donate small fin clips, we can send to you a vial and storage solution for the clipping as well as a self addressed, stamped return envelope." Please

contact Kosha Soneji at [harvardcichlid@yahoo.com](mailto:harvardcichlid@yahoo.com) if you are willing to donate fins from any of the following fish.

Pseudotropheus msobo  
Pseudotropheus liningstoni  
Schwetzochromis malagazensis  
Schwetzochromis mazimerensis  
Schwetzochromis storm????  
Seranochromis sp.?  
Simochromis babaulti  
Simochromis marginatus  
Simochromis diagramma  
Spathodus erythrodon  
Synodonis multipunctatus  
Tanganicodus iscaea  
Telmatochromis bifrenatus  
Thoradocrhomis brauschi  
Trematocara unimaculatum  
TriGlachromis otostigma  
Tropheus brichardi

Xenotilapia sima  
Xystichromis phytophagus

This is another way to become more involved with our fish. In participating we hope to gain some understanding about where our fishes' ancestors came from and appreciate the complexity of Nature in the diversity of our cichlids.

Hopefully a little incite into how scientists define a species was gained by reading this article. To my knowledge scientists are not testing a species by "crossing" it with a related fish to see if it breeds true. Instead bench work is augmented by observations of the fish in the natural habitat. Imagine attempting to determine a species

with these natural habitat observations. An extreme case is "Lamprologus" callipterus where the male is 13-25 fold larger than the female. The scientist finds these two dissimilar fish mate and produce viable offspring. If that is not evidence of crossbreeding

than what is? Thankful we have natural habitat observations to keep us from erroneous conclusions.

-By Bob Randall



Tropheus Duboisi, photo by Randy Stricklin

Tropheus duboisi  
Tropheus moorii  
Tropheus polli  
Tylochromis polylepis  
Xenotilapia caudafasciata  
Xenotilapia longispinis  
Xenotilapia papilio

# THE ADVENTURE

## Moving 1-2-3

Our Dailey adventure is going to be a little different this month. I'm going to walk everybody through my trials and tribulations moving my fish over the years.

Most of us probably know that moving a single tank doesn't pose too much difficulty, unless we are talking about a rather large one. Along those lines, it can go without saying that moving several aquariums can pose more problems than moving just a single one.

During my college years, having acquired several aquariums, I had to adapt to my new challenges at hand. As the years past, I accumulated more fish moves. Having several moves under my belt, I've fine-tuned my methods and believe that I've got a pretty good system. There are other ways to probably tackle the problem, but what I'm about to propose is easy and effective. I'm going to break down my most recent move, as it will apply all of my experiences.

I started off my whole project with an AC/DC Power Inverter. There are numerous manufacturers and suppliers of these. There are also many different models that vary in the amount of Watts one can pull through the inverter. I would suggest models around 140 Watts "Continuous" as this should be enough power to supply your needs. One should be able to purchase an inverter for about



\$30-\$40. Understand that once you own one, you'll find a million uses for it outside of just moving fish. I've used mine for our laptop for the kids to watch movies on long

trips. We run computer speakers off of it too, to enhance their viewing pleasure. We charge our mobile phones with it if we don't have our car adapter charger. In a power loss to our house years ago, we used the inverter with an extension cord to run incandescent lights for lighting in our house. So, when the significant other drops a jaw at the price, be prepared to make your sell, as it will have many uses.

I set up the inverter at the front of the vehicle plugging it into the appropriate DC outlet (cigarette lighter plug). One needs to make sure to check that the voltage matches up with the inverter (12V is common). After setting up the inverter, I then plug an air-pump cord into it. Depending on your needs, you might hook up an extension cord/power-strip for extra air pumps. Air-line tubing, etc. will be discussed later.

The great thing about this setup is that it will not only provide aeration for your fish, but also maintain your filters. That is to say, if you use sponge filters. Serious aquarists generally run a fair amount of sponge filters as it's probably the most cost-effective means of filtration. So, being a large move, most of us are likely to be not only

# THE ADVENTURE

saving our fish but the nitrifying bacteria in the filters as well.

So, you have your air filtration roughly set up. What is next? What I did on my last move was set up eight 55 gallon drums in my van. I filled each of these with about 20 gallons of water provided by a fish-safe hose. Please note, that the only lifting I had to do was putting the empty barrels into the vehicle. I made sure to treat each barrel with an adequate amount of dechlorinator. I also made sure the water temperature was about the same as in my aquariums. Being a very hot day and a move that wouldn't be so quick, I opted to have a slightly lower temperature in the barrels than the temperatures of the aquariums. I went with about a 2 degree Fahrenheit temperature difference. I figured, over the day, the water temperature would increase a small amount. Along with keeping the temperature more ideal for the fish, the lower temperatures also ensured that my fish used less oxygen.

My barrel selection was ideal as they were very tall, and having only 20 gallons of water in them, allowed the water to be disturbed without sloshing out of the barrel. If you substitute with something else (coolers, or totes), make sure to cover them the best you can, and you also might want to put down a waterproof tarp, or something



of the sort. You also probably want to take it easy around turns, and avoid abrupt stops.

Having the barrels filled and treated, the next project I performed was breaking down my aquariums. I personally use a sump area to siphon all of my tank water, and then use a water pump to carry the water to an appropriate drain. When moving I also had a few 20 gallon totes for holding fish. When I broke down my tanks, I first siphoned some tank water into the totes. I then netted my fish out into the totes. If you have a helper, they can assist by providing an assembly-line type structure. My spouse finished off the cleaning, and siphoning of water from the tanks. I took my fish out to the van, and netted them into their barrels. Along with this, I also made sure to take the

sponge filters and air-line tubing from the broken-down tank to maintain the fish. I hooked everything up to the existing air-pump in the vehicle. Depending on your set-up, it is advised to have extra airline tubing just in case you need a new run made. My wife and I repeated the above steps until we broke down all



# Congo Tetra

## Phenacogrammus interruptus

**Scientific Name:** Phenacogrammus interruptus (Boulenger, 1899); Family - Alestiidae; Order - Characiformes

**Synonyms:** Micralestes interruptus, Hemigrammalestes interruptus, Alestopeterius interruptus (all not valid)

**Etymology:** Phenacogrammus = 'false line', interruptus = 'interrupted' (Both refer to the incomplete lateral line of this fish)

**Region:** Congo River basin in the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire), Africa  
**Maximum Size:** 8.0cm (3.1 inches) TL for males, 6.0cm (2.3 inches) TL for females

**pH Range and Hardness:** prefers soft, slightly acid water. Will tolerate a pH range from 6.0 - 8.0 and dH from 5.0 - 19.0

**Temperature Range:** decidedly tropical; temperature range between 74 - 82 degrees F.

### Introduction

While the majority of popular aquarium tetras hail from South and Central America, Africa gives us a number of attractive and unique characins to grace our tanks. The Congo Tetra, Phenacogrammus

### Appearance:

If seen in a fish shop under less than ideal lighting conditions, the Congo Tetra is a rather drab, gray to silvery fish with a copper to reddish-brown band from the gill cover to the adipose fin. When the light

the trailing edge of the caudal fin (tail). These are especially developed in males and become more elaborate as the fish matures. The dorsal fin of the male is very long and may extend as far as the end of the tail in some individuals.



The dorsal, pelvic, anal and caudal fins are all generally light gray in color with milky white edges. The adipose fin is prominent.

### Breeding the Congo Tetra

Congo Tetras are not as easily bred as many of their South American cousins. Breeding generally

interruptus, is one of the most popular, colorful and commonly available of the African tetras.

### Habitat and Niche:

The Congo Tetra is an open-water, schooling fish that is found in the rivers and lakes of the Congo River basin. It is primarily insectivorous but will also feed on worms and some plant matter.

strikes their large opalescent scales from behind the observer, however, the effect is striking. Nearly every color of the rainbow may be refracted from the scales, though yellows, greens and blues predominate.

The alternate name of 'Featherfin Tetra' is used because of the feathery extensions that grow from

requires a large, well-lit tank with plenty of swimming space that is at least partially planted. The water should be soft and slightly on the acid side. Filtration through peat may be beneficial. Spawning temperature is best between 75 - 77 degrees F.

The breeding pair should be conditioned beforehand with ample feedings

## /SPECIES PROFILE #10/ by Joe Gallo of Texas Congo Tetra

of live or frozen foods. The male will actively pursue the ripe female until between 300 - 500 eggs are laid, generally in or around plants. The eggs are only weakly adhesive and many of them will sink to the bottom. The eggs hatch after 5 - 7 days. It is best to remove the parents after the eggs are laid. No parental care is provided and the adults may eat the eggs or fry.

### Personal Experiences with Phenacogrammus interruptus:

I have kept Congo Tetras on a number of occasions over the last few decades and have found them to be a real asset in a large aquarium. They have a tendency to be shy, especially if there are not places where they can hide when they feel the need. A nicely planted aquarium suits them fine. They are definitely most comfortable in schools of 5 or more but consideration must be given to their

adult size when choosing an aquarium. I recommend nothing smaller than a 29 gallon tank for a school of 5 of these fish.

damage. Very tiny fish will probably not be safe with *P. interruptus*. Over the years I've kept Congo Tetras with bichirs (*Polyp-terus*), African Butterfly

ium. Properly lighted, their colors are unmatched by most freshwater fish. I recommend them very highly.

### References:

William T. Innes. 1966. Exotic Aquarium Fishes - 19th Edition. Metaframe Corporation, New Jersey.  
J.J. Hoedman. 1975. Naturalist's Guide to Fresh-Water Aquarium Fish. Sterling Publishing Co., Inc., New York.  
Herbert Axelrod, et al. Exotic Tropical Fishes - Looseleaf



Feeding Congo Tetras is a simple task as they'll eat practically anything. Flake food, live and frozen brine shrimp, frozen blood-worms, small shrimp (live, frozen or freeze-dried), Daphnia (live or frozen) and tiny pieces of frozen beef heart will all rapidly disappear into their gullets.

Congo Tetras are not aggressive but occasionally males will have little spats that rarely result in any

Fish (Pantodon), 'Kribensis'-type cichlids (*Pelvicachromis*), and Synodontis catfish. Of course, one must be careful not to try to keep these fish with very aggressive fish like large cichlids or with fish large enough to eat them.

### Summary:

*Phenacogrammus interruptus* is the most commonly available African tetra and it is a real joy to have a school of these fish in an appropriately large aquar-

Edition. T.F.H. Publications, Inc., New Jersey.  
Jacques Gery. 1977. Characoids of the World. T.F.H. Publications, Inc., New Jersey.  
Article on *Phenacogrammus interruptus* at Fishbase.org - <http://www.fishbase.org/Summary/SpeciesSummary.cfm?ID=10660&genusname=Phenacogrammus&speciesname=interruptus>

by Joe Gallo (of Texas) & Aquarticles

# CICHLID *Ready*

Hello every one. Welcome to my fish room.

I keep rift lake cichlids and others in my tanks, with the newest one being a 125 gallon All Glass tank. In this tank, I have two species from Lake Tanganyika and one from Lake Malawi. The fish from Lake Tanganyika are *Cyprichromis leptosoma* neon heads chituta bay (also known as blue flash). There are about 22 in this breeding colony, and they are breeding all the time. The other fish from this lake is *Lamprologus sp. cylindricus*, of which I have twelve 1.75 -2" young fish in this group. This fish looks pretty cool swimming close to the rocks at all different angles. The fish from lake malawi is a true rock

Blue Flash Cyps



dweller, *Otopharynx lithobates* yellow blaze zimbabwe rock. I have one male and three females. They are breeding more often in this tank than they did in the other tank I had them in. All the females were

holding in about ten days. I also have six dwarf albino plecos in the tank to clean things up.

When I set this tank up, I started with two bags of pea-sized river gravel, one

40lb bag of crushed coral, one 50lb box of lace rock, one big chunk of golden lace rock and the drain tube. The plants I used are jungle val, java moss, long leaf green hygro and some anacharis.

I also have two 30 gallon tanks on a double wrought iron stand, two 55 gallon tanks on a double wrought iron stand, two 29 gallon tanks. One is on a wooden stand, while the other is on a double wrought iron stand with a 20 gallon long on the bottom. Next to them are the ten gallon tanks on a double wrought iron stand and one ten gallon on the floor.

This is a break down of what I keep in each tank. **The 30 gallon tanks:** top 30 has 30 plus dwarf albino plecos, 20 dwarf brown



Lake Kyoga Zebras spawning (Lake Victoria)

# CICHLID *Ready* cont. from page 12

plecos, 9 long fin dwarf albino plecos, 20 skunk loaches, 11 cyprichromis leptosoma neon heads and my daughter's platys. The bottom 30 has 11 Lamprologus leleupi firecracker.

**The 55 gallon tanks:** The top 55 has 14 adult hippo point salmon from Lake Victoria and 4 dwarf albino plecos. The bottom 55 has fish from all three rift lakes in it. Fish from Malawi - 12 adult Pseudotropheus demasoni. From Tanganyika - 4 Lamprologus brichardi (lyre tail brichardi). From Victoria - 11 anchorbay nubilia and 5 dwarf albino plecos. **The 29 gallon**

**on a wooden stand:** two types of cichlids - 15 cyprichromis leptosoma neon heads mplunga, and from Lake Victoria, anchorbay nubilia and 3 dwarf albino plecos. **The 29 and 20 long on a double wrought iron stand.** The 29 gallon on top also has 5 Altolamprologus redfin compressiceps and 5 redfin piebalds and 3 dwarf albino plecos. The 20 long has 12 Lamprologus sp. brevis sun spots with a lot of shells for breeding and hiding. The 10 gallon on the floor has 25 1.25" cyprichromis leptosoma-neon heads in it.

All of the tanks have air driven sponge filters and hang on back filters, (3 have air stones with H.O.B. filters run out of sponge filters). I use crushed coral in all of the tanks to main-

tain a good level of ph in water. Tank clean up is pretty basic - top off the water levels once a week, clean gravel, filters and change the water every two to three weeks and add cichlid trace elements.

I added some old fish nets as wall paper to get that nautical feel in my fish room. I also put some old snail shells and barnacle clusters in some of the tanks for hiding places for small fry and the shell dwellers to breed in.

Most of the tanks have the same types of plants in them. I have jungle val, java moss, anubus nana, anacharis, limnobium laevigatum (looks like giant duck weed), long leaf green hygro, and some orange african hygro. I have 3 more tanks: one 20

high, one 30 long (broken bottom not in use) and a 75 gallon up stairs that is full of african cichlids. I have tried a lot of the African cichlids, and I think I like the Lake Tanganyika cichlids the most. My tanks

are a little Tanganyika heavy. Rift lake cichlids are the best.

*-Robert James Dolan*



long fin dwarf albino plecos

# LAKE MALAWI: Darwin's Playground

parts of the reefs, having an irregular, broken up color pattern makes these fish much harder to see from the air, giving them a much better chance of not being seen by the birds that hunt the reefs of Lake Malawi looking for tasty cichlids.

It is believed that the genetic isolation on the reefs is what has accelerated the many radiations and morphs of Lake Malawi's

rated by large expanses of open water, are difficult for fish to move to and from. With strong competition for food, leaving the relative safety of the reef could mean falling prey to catfish like *Bathyclarias ilesi*, or some of the larger open water cichlids, like *Rhamphochromis*. The fact that most cichlids never venture far from the reefs where they were spawned isolates the gene pool for any specific species,

the genetics to be passed down to future generations successfully.

The species radiations and behavior has captivated ichthyologists for the last few hundred years. Lake Malawi cichlids are also known to be some of the most colorful freshwater fish on the planet. Combine those three traits with their ease to breed, and it's no wonder why the cichlids of Lake Malawi have be-

the aquarium trade.

#### Sources:

1. Konings, Ad. (2001) *Malawi Cichlids in their Natural Habitat* 3rd Ed. Cichlid Press. El Paso, Texas
2. Dive Wild (2005) [www.divewild.com](http://www.divewild.com)
3. World Wildlife Federation. (2005) [www.panda.org](http://www.panda.org)

## Dailey

### THE ADVENTURE

of the aquariums.

After getting all the fish and filters set up in their barrels I made the commute to my new house. A word of caution, avoid extremes of heat and/or cold as best as possible. Upon arrival at our new house, I put my aquariums where needed, and filled them with my hose; making sure to treat all the water appropriately. I also made sure to check the water temperatures of both the barrels and the newly filled aquariums. In the interim of the tanks filling, I brought in a barrel of fish at a time. I tipped most of the water off just outside of the van, to avoid carrying unneeded weight. After getting the fish to their aquariums, I simply netted them out of the barrels and placed them into their new home. I repeated all these steps until I had all the barrels empty.

From my own loss in my last move, and one I should have known better, never trust a friend to take care of your fish. I had been working with the wife breaking down the tanks and had asked somebody to set up the filters and the fish in their barrels. However, being a busy move, they

put off setting up the filters, and had only put the fish into the barrels. I only lost 20 fish, but still...it was a great loss to me, and one that could have been avoided easily. Other than that, I would have had no problems with my set-up...as I've never had problems doing it before. Again, there are other ways to go about it, such as using aquarium water instead of fresh water in the barrels. There are merits to both depending on your aquarium water.

Hope you enjoyed my little adventure...it certainly was just that for me.

**-Brett Dailey**

#### 2005 BAP STANDINGS

Name	'05 BAP Points
1. Jo Meade	70
2. Bob Randall	60
3. Bill Brown	50
4. Matt Anderson	30
5. Scott Carlson	20
6. James Kutscher	10

August 13, 2005  
Swap Meet from 10am-12pm  
Meeting at 2pm  
www.iowaaquaria.com

Best Western Des Moines North  
5055 Merle Hay Road  
Johnston, IA 50131  
For info: (563)-386-7913



Looks like it's IAA SwapMeet time again.

# IOWA AQUARIA ASSOCIATION

## / CALENDAR OF EVENTS /

DATE	TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
Aug. 4	7:30 PM	MAS Meeting	St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, Roseville, MN
<b>Aug. 9</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>EIAA Meeting</b>	<b>Kenwood Park Presbyterian Church, NE Cedar Rapids, IA</b>
<b>Aug. 13</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b>	<b>IAA Swap/Meeting</b>	<b>Best Western Des Moines North (see above)</b>
Aug. 14	7:00 PM	GCCA Meeting	Holiday Inn, Rolling Meadows, IL
Sept. 1	7:30 PM	MAS Meeting	St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, Roseville, MN
Sept. 11	7:00 PM	GCCA Meeting	Holiday Inn, Rolling Meadows, IL
<b>Sept. 13</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>EIAA Meeting</b>	<b>Kenwood Park Presbyterian Church, NE Cedar Rapids, IA</b>
Sept. 18	11:00 AM	GCCA All-species Auction	Sheraton Hotel, Arlington Heights, IL