

In Depth

September 2016

Trip to the Galapagos

Visiting the Georgia Aquarium

Calendar of Coming Events

and so much more!



Enter Your Best Fish in the TFCB Bowl Show, Sept 8th!



Photo by Ann Whitman

In Depth

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We meet on the second Thursday of each month, September through June, at 6:30 PM at the VFW Hall, 73 Pearl St, Essex Junction, VT.

Our membership consists of adults, children and teens. Many members are very experienced and have been keeping fish for years, and others are just getting started. People of all ages and experience levels are always welcome. Meet and learn from those who share your interests!

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Photo by Ann Whitman

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From the President

by David L Banks, Jr

This fall will be a great chance to get your fish fix! We will start off our September 8th meeting with Livy Strong sharing her travels to the Galapagos earlier this year. While it may not be a totally fish related program, it should be very interesting for all of us. We will also have a bowl show, with cash prizes! I hope everyone can plan to bring in at least one entry. Please contact me if you would like to use a 2.5 or 5 gallon tank. Rules for the bowl show are included in this newsletter.

October will be a very busy fish event month. Our monthly meeting will take place at a special place and night, Tuesday, October 11, at the Holiday Inn on Williston Rd, South Burlington, right off I-89 exit 14 E. TFCB will be hosting Hans-Georg Evers. Hans is from Germany and is the editor of *Amazonas* magazine. A world-reknoned catfish expert and speaker at the upcoming Catfish Convention, Hans' program will be, "Stories from a Tropical Living Room, Habitats of *Corydoras* Catfish".

Our annual auction is also planned for October, on Sunday, the 30th. We will have a bowl show at the auction too. This is a great way to show off your fish to all those attending the auction. More cash prizes! Details will follow in the October newsletter.

We also are planning a road trip for club members in October. Details are still being finalized, and will be available shortly.

The All Aquarium Catfish Convention will take place in Washington, DC, Oct 13-16, and I know several of us are planning to attend. This convention is held only every other year and is widely attended. Hans will be one of the speakers, in addition to many others, including Regina Spotti, Eric Bodrock, Stephan Tanner, and Ingo Seidel. Room sales are a major highlight of the convention, which allow you to purchase rare and unusual species directly from the breeder or importer. It's a great place to meet others who share your interest, pick up tips and network with experts. If you have any interest in catfish, I highly recommend trying to make this convention.

So much more this fall, too, and you will hear more about these in coming months: the Aquatic Experience in Chicago, other clubs' events, TFCB November meeting and our annual holiday meeting in December. We've got another great year coming up!

David



Editorial

Taking a Summer Break

By Ann Whitman

Tropical fish have never been a priority for me in the summer. So many competing interests and activities! This summer was no exception. Between family commitments, gardening and travel, my fish didn't get much attention. Hey, on many days, they were lucky to even get fed. Weekly water changes slipped to once every couple of weeks (or so), and I actually took down about one-third of my tanks. Gasp!

Some lucky fish got to live outside in waterlily-filled tubs for the summer. At least I hope they were lucky. I haven't emptied my tubs yet so I don't know what made it and what succumbed to predators or other disasters. I know that a group of young kribensis got eaten by damselfly larvae back in early July. Oops. Lately, I've seen movement in at least five out of six tubs, so I'm hopeful. The nights are finally starting to get chilly, so I'll be bringing the fish back inside soon.

Reducing the number of tanks, and moving lots of fish to outside tubs, made it simpler to leave on our half-month vacation. Instead of hiring a fulltime housesitter, we were able to have a neighbor come in every three days and dump premeasured packets of food into the tanks. That worked for most fish. The only casualties were a few killifish that demand live or frozen food. Sad losses. Next time, I'll farm those out to a fellow hobbyist for safekeeping.

Once the nights get cold, and the gardening and kayaking seasons wind down, I'll be ready to head back into my fishroom. Autumn is full of exciting fish-related events to get me back on track, too. One of the best events is the [All Aquarium Catfish Convention](#) near the Dulles airport in Virginia. This happens only once every two years and is a fantastic place to buy rare fish, meet successful fish breeders and make lots of new fish friends. The 3rd floor room sales are among the best in the hobby. When I attended in 2014, I ended up shipping a full styro home—and didn't lose a single fish. Let's hope my outdoor summer tub fish are as lucky!

Ann



A group of wild-caught Corydoras C-141, my new favorite Cory. photo by Ann Whitman



Speaker of the Month

My Trip to the Galapagos Islands

Livy Strong has a passion for all animals, and protecting the environment that they require. She is president of the Jericho-Underhill Land Trust, which is an all-volunteer, non-profit that has permanently conserved over 1500 acres, thus far. She also chairs the Jericho-Underhill Park District, which owns and manages the 216-acre Mills Riverside Park. At home, she and her canine Doberman partner, Nerian, compete in advanced tracking, obedience and protection work. Livy also watches over five aquariums that are mostly devoted to African and South American cichlids.

Her trip to the Galapagos Islands brought together her love of animals and the protection of a very special place. On Thursday, Sept. 8, Livy will share her experiences and images of the Galapagos and its creatures.



Galapagos Tortoise, photo by Livy Strong

Club Meetings and Events

by Ann Whitman

Bowl Show at Our September TFCB Meeting

Bring your best fish to our September meeting on the 8th! At our Board of Directors meeting in May, we decided to have bowl shows at club meetings twice a year in the warm months of June and September, beginning Sept 2016. These will be judged by People's Choice popular vote. **First prize will be \$20**, 2nd and 3rd prizes will be ribbons.

We will also have a bowl show at our October 30th auction. All entries will be Open Class. It will be judged professionally and also by People's Choice. The professionally judged entries will be awarded 1st prize of \$50, 2nd prize of \$25 and 3rd prize of \$10. The People's Choice 1st place award will be \$25. No other awards will be given.



Tropical Fish Club of Burlington Bowl Show Rules

1. Fish must be displayed in a bare tank or bowl, i.e. no decorations, no gravel etc. The tank or bowl must have one flat side and hold less than 20 gallons of water.
2. The club maintains a limited supply of Critter Keepers for member use at events. If you need an aquarium for the show, please email [David Banks](#) at least 24 hours before the meeting and let him know whether you need a 2-1/2 or 5-gallon tank. Remaining tanks will be available on a first come, first serve basis at the meeting.
3. Life support systems are not encouraged, but will be accepted if necessary to sustain a particular fish.
4. No lights.
5. Water is available, but entrants must supply their own water conditioner, nets, etc.
6. There is a limit of 3 entries per person per class.
7. Judging will be by both popular vote and a qualified judge, when available.
8. The Tropical Fish Club of Burlington is not responsible for any loss or damage resulting from these bowl shows.



CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

- Sept 8 [TFCB meeting](#), 6:30, VFW, Essex Jct, VT
- Sept 9 - 11 [Tropical Fish Society of Rhode Island 43rd Annual Aquarium Show & Auction](#), Cumberland, RI
- Sept 16 - 18 [Keystone Clash Fish Show](#) and Speaker conference, York, PA
- Sept 25 [Norwalk Aquarium Society 50th Annual Auction](#), Westport, CT
- Oct 9 [North Jersey Aquarium Society Fall Auction](#)
- Oct 11 [TFCB meeting](#), Hans-Georg Evers speaker, Holiday Inn, So. Burlington, VT
- Oct 13 - 16 [All Aquarium Catfish Convention](#) (CatCon), Hyatt Dulles, Herndon, VA
- Oct 16 [New Hampshire Aquarium Society Annual Auction](#), Portsmouth, NH
- Oct 23 [New England Cichlid Association Fall Auction](#), Windsor Locks, CT
- Oct 30 [TFCB Annual Auction](#), Holiday Inn, So. Burlington, VT
- Nov 4 - 6 [Aquatic Experience](#), Schaumburg, IL
- Nov 5 - 6 [Boston Aquarium Society](#) 100th Anniversary show and auction
- Nov 17 [TFCB meeting](#), 6:30, VFW, Essex Jct, VT
- March 10 - 12 [NEC 42nd Annual Convention](#), Rocky Hill, CT



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In My Travels – The Georgia Aquarium (July 2006)

By David L Banks Jr, TFCB



It had been a while since I have been able to do any fishy activities on my trips, but I think I made up for it on this trip. I was in the Atlanta area for a nice hot week in July and did not plan to have much free time during the day. I checked the schedule of the new aquarium that had recently opened in Atlanta, but the only night they were open late was the night I was leaving. Oh well, I figured, maybe next time. As it turned out, we finished up work early on Friday, and our flights were not until 6:00 PM.



We arrived 11:30 at the [Georgia Aquarium](#) at about and there were lots of people around. We parked and headed to the front entrance. Once there, it was a short line through security and not a very long line to get tickets so we couldn't understand why there were so many people just waiting around. Once we got to the front of the ticket line, we figured it out. They sell tickets with entrance times, and the 12:00 tickets had sold out, the next time we could get in was 1:00. So we bought the tickets and went to find lunch. The Georgia Aquarium has more than two million visitors a year, so I definitely recommend buying tickets ahead of time!



The temperatures were up into the 90's and very humid, probably typical weather for Atlanta in July, maybe even a little cooler than normal. After we ate lunch at a nearby diner, we walked around a little. Centennial Park is right across the street and they were preparing for the 10-year anniversary of the Olympic opening games that were held there in 1996. If you remember, this is where a bomb had gone off during the opening night. We did not venture very far though, it was much too hot for us. Across the street, we got an ice cream and headed for a hotel lobby to wait out the rest of the wait time.

Centennial Park, home of the 1996 summer Olympic opening ceremony



Once inside, we realized just how busy and popular the aquarium was. In 2006, the aquarium was still very new and this was a hot summer day, perfect for being inside the cool, dim interior. The displays were incredible, there were tanks above you so you could see the bottom-dwelling fish, large active tanks of many fish that hobbyists typically keep in aquariums, like African cichlids, discus, tetras and catfish. A very large reef tank with an immense wave maker crashed a large surge wave over the entire tank. Then there was the extraordinary, the absolutely huge, marine tank complete with whale sharks! It was like standing in the



South American tank with discus, angelfish and tetras



African cichlid display tank, a very large and active tank

middle of the ocean when you stood in front of the large viewing window. There was even a tunnel you could go thru in the middle of this tank. This was certainly the highlight of any visit to the aquarium. I hope the pictures give you an idea of everything we saw. To get some perspective on the size and scope of the Georgia Aquarium, take a look at the [map](#). It was certainly an opportunity I am glad we did not miss!



Incredibly huge marine tank, whale sharks and all



One of the huge whale sharks up close



This tank offered a unique perspective, the fish were above you!



Reef tank with a huge surge/wave maker



A tunnel going thru the center of the huge marine tank was an unbelievable experience. Walking beneath the sea was a highlight of our trip.

The Catfish-cianado #10

The Blackfin Cory (*Corydoras leucomelas*)

by Tony Kroeger

This is a great beginners catfish, but catfish-cianados like it, too! Very hardy, always available and inexpensive, easy to feed and keep, peaceful—what more can you ask for in a catfish? They are great community and nano tank fish. I've never had them bother any other fish, not even baby guppies.

This small catfish stays under 2" inches in length and is native to Columbia, Peru and Ecuador. The body is cream colored with a black mask over the eyes and forehead. The dorsal fin is mostly black and the tail is vertically banded. The body is covered in small, irregular black dots. Its name "leucomelas", from the Greek, means black and white.



Corydoras leucomelas, photo by Janiczak, B.J.

This catfish is frequently imported and usually available at local fish stores. They are tolerant of most clean water conditions with a pH between 6.0 and 8.0, temperatures in the 70s. Like other Corydoras catfish, Blackfins eat any food offered that is of an appropriate size: pellets, flakes, frozen or live. They especially love live blackworms and will root through the gravel to suck them out like strands of spaghetti. They push their noses into the substrate constantly in search of food, so it's best to keep them on fine, rounded gravel or sand. Their barbels are easily damaged or even eroded by sharp substrate. They do not regenerate if cut off and are slow to heal if damaged.

In nature, this fish and many other Corydoras root around in mulm in soft substrates. I use fine sand and add crushed, dried oak leaves to simulate their natural environment. The leaves leach tannins that stain the water the color of tea. The Blackfins love this.

Corys school together in nature, so always keep at least three of the same species together. If you have room, get a group of at least six or more. They are active all day, but if you give them a cave, they will take an afternoon siesta! Although they are not particularly spiny, their dorsal and pectoral fins are sharp and can inflict a painful puncture if handled carelessly.

This Corydoras is very hardy, rarely gets sick and can live for many years. They love clean water and appreciate 20 to 25% weekly water changes. They also appreciate a steady current from an airstone or filter outflow. Their activity level increases noticeably after water changes. You will see them come to the surface for gulps of air, a common practice for all corys.

Like other corys, Blackfin males are smaller and slimmer, females are wider and deeper bodied. This is easiest to see when looking down at them from above. Give these fish a try—they are hard to beat!

Until next time, "catfish dreams",

Tony