

**GPASI**

Greater Pittsburgh Aquarium Society, Inc.

Serving hobbyists in the Pittsburgh area since 1947

# Finformation

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[www.gpasi.org](http://www.gpasi.org)



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Cover Photo by Eric Bodrock: Carlhubbsia stuarti	

*NEXT MEETING:*  
**February 29<sup>th</sup>**

**All About Plants!**

## **This Month's Meeting**

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**February 29**

### **Tim Gross - Reasons to Keep a Planted Tank and Easy Plants.**

Manager of A&B Oddball Pets and Aquarium, AHAP chair for the GPASI and founding member of the Pittsburgh Area Planted Aquarium Society. With Tim's extensive work with aquatic plants and his willingness to share information, this is your chance to get all your plant questions answered.

### **Sam Darko - Breeding Fish in a Planted Tank**

Sam has been keeping fish since he was 14 and has enjoyed planted aquariums since he was 20. Currently Sam is fascinated with new world Dwarf Cichlids. When Sam is not with his fish or working, he's enjoying the company of his wonderful son, precious daughter and beautiful wife. Yes, you can have a planted tank and participate in the BAP too!

### **Cavan Allen - Aquatic Plants**

Cavan is in charge of the "Plantfinder" for aquaticplantcentral.com. Also a columnist for "The Aquatic Gardener" and moderator for aquaticplantcentral.com. The years of maintaining planted tanks keeps Cavan high on the list of local Aquatic Horticulturist.

## **2008 Junior "Breeder of the Year" Award**

In 2008, the GPASI, Breeder Award Program (BAP) committee is going to give a junior "Breeder of the Year" award. Club members, under the age of 18 will be able to compete for this award. All the regular BAP rules apply for submissions. In addition, the participant with the most number of spawns will also receive an personally signed, dated copy of Ian Fuller's book "Breeding Corydoradine Catfish", a priceless one-of-kind book!! Let's hope that the winner submits at least one catfish spawn! For more info, contact Chuck Bialon at [bialon@ppg.com](mailto:bialon@ppg.com) 412.487.2378 or Eric Bodrock at [coryjeb@verizon.net](mailto:coryjeb@verizon.net) 412.655.3994

## **President's Message**

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**By Bill Sensor**

Hi everyone and welcome to the new year here in GPASI. It has taken some years for me to decide to take the step to become the president of the club and hopefully I will do a good job. I would like to see this be a banner year with more people joining in the BAP and AHAP programs. Last year was the most contested year in along time for the top BAP winner, so lets make it even better in 2008. This year looks to have promise with Eric Bodrock taking over as program director in the last quarter of 2007. It looks like we will have a good year of people coming in to speak at our meetings. We are having our spring auction at the North Hampton Fire Hall on April 17 and I hope to see you all there. This months meeting is Feb. 29 at the Garden Center and I will see you there.

Bill

~ There can be no club without its members. If there is anything that you would like to do for GPASI, just let one of us know. We'd be happy to have you as part of the team. ~

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## **Call for Volunteers & Other News**

- i) Programs Contact—Eric Bodrock is lining up speakers for 2008. Any suggestions contact Eric
- ii) Auction Chairman- we have auctioneers, we need someone to manage the auctions and work with our Treasurer, Sue Solito.
- iii) Photos, Drawings and Articles Needed—send to Steve O. I want to publish more members articles or photos.
- iv) GPASI—Spring Auction Sunday April 27 @ Hampton Fire Hall. Registration 11am. Auction Starts at Noon.

# **Breeding Pterophyllum Scalare**

by Joe Doyle

I have raised *Pterophyllum scalare* for many years and had many egg laying pairs, but have been unable to keep the fry alive for more than a month. In this article, I will discuss the conditioning of adults, the spawning environment, and success in raising fry.

I obtained 25 one inch fry from a local breeder in the Pittsburgh area. The color pattern on the babies was a mix of black veil (father) and silver with black stripes (mother). Each pattern on each baby was like a finger print making each one unique and easy to identify pairs, once established.



The group grew to be 5 inches in a matter of 6 months and began pairing off. A variety of foods were offered including flake, frozen brine shrimp, frozen blood worms, and an occasional live treat such as daphnia, and live brine shrimp. The group was kept in a 15 gallon tall aquarium and later moved to a 29 gallon tank. The water conditions were a ph range of 7.0 to 7.2, water temperature 78F degrees, and water hardness around 3.0.

One pair adopted an extra fish who shared in the duties of protecting the territory. The oddball ate each egg after the female laid it, and the male fertilized it. Otherwise, all the pairs evened out. There were no large subgroups of all females or all males.

I sold and bartered away all the fish except one pair which I kept solely in a 29 gallon tank. The water temperature was raised from 78F to 80F degrees. The pair spawned 3 times over the course of 9 weeks. Most of the eggs would turn white, due to being unfertile, and the hatchings never seemed to yield more than 10 babies. Any babies that did survive to become free swimming would never live more than 3-4 weeks, and the inexperienced pair would often abandon the fry and return to laying another set of eggs. The spawning medium was the vertical side of a water intake pipe, on a water filter. Later, the pair used a large leaf of an Amazon sword, preferring the 45 degree angle.

On the 10th week, I started adding fish to the pair's 29 gallon tank. I added 7 female Bettas, one male Betta, 5 neon tetras, 3 danios, and 2 cherry barbs. A dramatic difference in the number of fertilized eggs on the next angel breeding succession was noticed. Now that the tank was full of fish, out of 200-300 eggs, only 3 or 4 eggs would turn white. The only explanation could be the circumstance of the territory being limited by the number of fish in the 29 gallon. The angels were forced into protecting their territory and eggs from the other fish, and in turn made them more successful at each spawning. Later, I removed many of the other fish and noticed the angel pair became relaxed in their spawning efforts and the fry school sized diminished as well. My conclusion is that in order to have large schools of baby angel fry, fish of different species are required to force the parents to protect their own.



The parents watch over the eggs for 3-4 days as the eggs mature. When a tail is visible, protruding from the egg and wiggling, the parents suck the baby out of the egg encasing and spit them out onto a new surface where they stick. The babies take another 6-7 days to develop eyes and to fully absorb their yoke sack and become free-swimming. At this stage, the light was left on 24/7; otherwise the other fish in the tank would sneak in at night or early morning and eat all the eggs and any wigglers. Water temperature was kept at 80F, and a ph of 7.0 was maintained.

Next, was the task of deciding when is the best time to remove the fry from the parents. I decided to experiment with one spawning. Using a 1/2" hose, I removed half of the new wiggling babies to a new location, into a 10 gallon fry tank. I left the other half with the parents. The wigglers I moved to the 10 gallon became free swimming a day earlier than the ones left with the parents. That extra day made a big

difference in their growth rate and competitive nature for food. The fry left with the parents were moved to the 10 gallon fry tank, once free swimming.

As soon as all the fry were free swimming in the 10 gallon, I started exclusive feedings of microworms every 12 hours. Because the microworms were in the oatmeal yeast mixture, I began having an issue with algae clouding up the water. But this had no effect on the fry what so ever. Frequent water changes of 2 or 3 times a week helped to keep the water clear, so I could watch the babies interact & monitor their growth rates.



The fry started to form separate schools amongst themselves and began schooling around the tank after 2 weeks. I started moving the larger babies out of the 10 gallon and into an empty 29 gallon I had prepared for them after 2 months of age. The only thing I fed the fry was microworms, and nothing else. I continued this feeding regiment until their mouths looked big enough to eat frozen blood worms & frozen brine shrimp. Later, I started introducing TetraMin flake food as an occasional snack.

Angel fry grow at different rates and some become food for siblings. I took the approach "save every last one", opposed to "survival of the fittest". Some fry were left in the 10 gallon fry tank longer than others. Adding guppies to the 29 gallon provided the baby angels with occasional treats of live food. All total, I captured 3 large spawns of fry from the parents, and then moved on to spawning *Puntius titteya* (cherry barb).

I encourage you to pursue finding your own method to spawning *Pterophyllum scalare*. As a wise Master Breeder once told me, you may read of a hundred different ways to spawn a fish, but there is only one way that will work for you.

## GPASI Marketplace

Vince Buszko is looking for 40-50 gal breeder tanks and 55 & 75 tanks for sale. Contact Vince at 412-848-5948.

Barb Jurich is starting to keep very large tanks and so is phasing out her smaller ones. She has these for sale with or without accessories, prices negotiable: a 50-gallon breeder, a 20-gallon long, a 15-gallon, and various 10-gallon tanks. 412-287-2078

Walter Roth has plastic bags to sell in 100 count packages. Sizes are 6 x 12", 8 x 15", 10 x 20". He also has a large selection of pond plants. Water Hyacinths, Water Lettuce, Lilies, Water Canna, Iris, Tara, and more. Also pond Fish & Supplies available. Call Walt at 724-449-9651

Sharon Serbin designs and creates fish-related art: stained glass mosaic tables and wall hangings; tile mosaic floors; and hand-painted T-shirts and other clothes items. E-mail [sjsrbin@pgh.net](mailto:sjsrbin@pgh.net) or page her at (412) 949-3106.

To let other members know about aquarium-related items you'd like to buy, sell, or trade, contact Steve Okabayashi at [sokabaya@us.ibm.com](mailto:sokabaya@us.ibm.com). **Please let me know when you want to delete your ad.**



## RAINBOW SHINER

*Notropis chrosomus*

Article & Photos by Eric Bodrock

When folks visit my fishroom, this is usually what happens to them the instant they see my Rainbow Shiners: their mouths will drop open. After a minute or two, when they are able to mutter out a few words, they say what their brain already knows, "I NEED to have some of those!" "What are they?" is usually next, wiping the drool from their mouth. My casual reply, "Oh those are just some minnows from down south, somewhere in Alabama". "Minnows....." they think to themselves, "...like fishing bait minnows? Can't be, these are beautiful, one of the most beautiful fish I've ever seen in an aquarium!" Next comes, "How much?" At that point, I know that an uncontrollable "must have" urge has hit them! I must say that these little beauties have taken me also and I am positive that these will always remain in my fishroom. Yes, they are THAT beautiful!



The Males have a dark body with a bright reddish-gold stripe running down their sides from behind their head to the base of their tale. They show an incredible iridescent blue shimmer over a good portion of their body and fins. This blue color reflects light even in the dimmest of conditions. When light from a flashlight hits them, the color is almost overwhelming! Amazingly, the males hold this color all year round. When they are in spawning mode, the blue fades and they become a rosy pink color! The females have the

same basic colors, but lack the intensity and the brilliance of the blue the males have.

In nature, Rainbow Shiners are found in small streams accompanied by a species of bottom feeding fish, *Campostoma sp.*, commonly referred to as Stonerollers. Male Stonerollers build a large spawning nest made of small stones and pebbles. These nests may be up to a foot in diameter. Shiners will sneak in and spawn over these nests while the Stonerollers are preoccupied, their eggs falling into the gravel. The advantage of having the Stone Rollers protection of the spawn site allows the opportunity for the Shiner's eggs to hatch before predators eat them. Several species of 'Minnows' will spawn in this manner and often at the same time!

To mimic this, I set up a bare bottom fifteen gallon aquarium. The underside of the aquarium was painted black to prevent any light from shining up through the bottom. A Hydro-sponge filter was placed in the middle of the aquarium. I placed a six-inch in diameter round flowerpot coaster, the orange terra cotta type, at one end. The coaster was filled with pea-sized to half inch in diameter round river rocks about one inch deep. The idea of the coaster was to simulate the Stonerollers spawning nest. In the rest of the aquarium, I placed a few smaller sized rocks, flat clam shells (these also helps to maintain pH) and a floating yarn mop just to provide some security for the adults. A group of six fish, three pairs, is used to make up my spawning group. Their diet consists of a wide range of foods. At least once a day, one or more of the following live foods is offered: daphnia, mosquito larvae, baby brine shrimp or blackworms. In addition,



frozen bloodworms and glass worms, along with assorted flakes are added to balance out their complete diet. As you can imagine, they will accept anything that they can fit into their mouths!

About forty percent of the water is changed on a weekly basis, helping to keep their water conditions stable, reduce Nitrates and keeping the pH around 7.2. The temperature stays consistent in the mid 70°F range.

Spawning usually occurs within hours of the morning light reaching them. The entire group becomes very active with the males driving the females hard. They all frenzy over the “spawning nest” which is truly a sight to see! Spawning can go on for an hour or so. The best way to figure out whether or not they actually spawned is to take notice of the females’ stomach size. Before spawning they can get rather large bellies and if they did spawn, their bellies will thin out from depositing eggs. Once it has been determined that the females dropped eggs, (or I think that they did), I remove the coaster and dump the entire contents into a plastic shoebox. The gravel is picked out and placed back into the coaster, which then goes back into the aquarium. If their spawning efforts were successful, the remaining water in the shoebox will be filled with eggs which may contain up to three hundred from a single female! Their eggs are clear and about one millimeter in diameter. At 74°F, the eggs will hatch in about thirty hours. It should be noted, that I have never found developing eggs (or fry) in the coaster. If the eggs are not removed the same day as the spawn occurs, they simply disappear! My best guess is that there is not enough circulation under the gravel to keep the eggs alive and they dissolve. There is something to note here: there have been times when I didn’t bother to check the coaster for a few days. After I did decide to check for eggs and removed the coaster, WOW! You wouldn’t believe how bad the smell is from a coaster of gravel that had a spawn of eggs in it several days earlier!



I have had my best hatches result by dumping the eggs into a two and a half gallon aquarium filled with water from the spawning tank with a cup of good green water and an airstone with a slight airflow. It takes another thirty to forty hours after they hatch for the fry to become free-swimming. Once they are free-swimming, around four millimeters in length, a little APR is added. Within days, microworms and finely crushed flakes are offered; baby brine follows a few days later.



The fry grow quickly doubling in size to eight millimeters in only eleven days. At twenty-one days old, most fry reach twelve millimeters. When they hit thirty days old, the largest fry measure a centimeter and a half. At this time, you can start to see some glimmers of blue on them with a flashlight! Up until this point, their bodies are very, very thin. Now they start to bulk up a bit and get some mass to their mid section.



As they grow out, I haven’t experienced any problems with losses. A batch of fry did break out with the small parasites, commonly called Velvet, but a dose of salt added to the water cleared it up.

Other than breathtaking beauty, ease in spawning & rearing of young and easy feeding requirements, there are several other desirable characteristics of these fish. They are excellent, peaceful community fish! They can be given



the same care as for a Tetra, Rasbora or Rainbowfish. They are always active, moving into all areas of the aquarium. They don’t even need a heater; they can handle temperatures high into the mid 80°F range and low into the 40°s. Maybe best of all, they are native to the United States!

So there you have it, my run down on a li'l ol’ minnow from down Alabama way. I can’t imagine a single reason why no one would not want to have these fish!

Eric Bodrock  
October, 2007

## Upcoming Events for 2008

**Killifish Karnival**, Elkhart, IN  
February 23-24, 2008 574-293-6053 – Jim Hinkle

**Scales Auction**, Massillon, Ohio  
February 24, 2008 330-452-9027 – John Baad

### THE GREATER AKRON AQUARIUM SOCIETY SPRING AUCTION

Sunday, March 2nd, 2008 - <http://www.gaas-fish.net/>

Bud White (330) 848-3866 - [bud@gaas-fish.net](mailto:bud@gaas-fish.net)

Rich Serva (330) 650-4613 - [rich@gaas-fish.net](mailto:rich@gaas-fish.net)

**Columbus Area Fish Enthusiasts' (CAFE) First Ever Swap Meet**  
Saturday, March 8, 2008 - <http://www.columbusfishclub.org/swapmeet.php>

**Youngstown Area Tropical Fish Society Auction**  
March 16, 2008 Tom DiCola - [MRUARU2@aol.com](mailto:MRUARU2@aol.com) - 330-758-3043

**The 33rd NEC Annual Convention- "PIRATES of the NEC"**  
April 11-13, 2008 - <http://northeastcouncil.org/html/>  
Janine & David Banks (802) 372-8716 [dbanks@together.net](mailto:dbanks@together.net)

## GPASI Spring Auction

### Sunday April 27, 2008

**The American Livebearer Association Convention 2008**

May 2-4, 2008 - <http://www.livebearers.org/>

Rich Serva (330) 650-4613 - [rich@gaas-fish.net](mailto:rich@gaas-fish.net)

**American Killifish Association National Convention 2008**

May 23-25, 2008 Tom Grady - 518-483-2668 - [www.-AKA-BNL@killienutz.com](mailto:www.-AKA-BNL@killienutz.com)

**American Cichlid Association national Convention 2008**, Atlanta GA

July 17-20, 2008 <http://www.aca2008.com>

**THE GREATER AKRON AQUARIUM SOCIETY Show & Auction**, Tallmadge OH  
August 2-3 2008 <http://www.gaas-fish.net/> Bud White (330) 848-3866 - [bud@gaas-fish.net](mailto:bud@gaas-fish.net)

**YATFS Show & Auction**, Howland, Ohio  
August 16-17, 2008 330-716-0889 – Mike Kays

**All-Aquarium Catfish Convention - Expedition Amazon 2008**

October 16-19, 2008, Laurel, Maryland

Andrew Blumhagen - 240-472-4216 - <http://www.pvas.com/>

**YATFS Auction**, Lordstown, Ohio

October 19, 2008 330-758-3043 – Tom

**THE GREATER AKRON AQUARIUM SOCIETY Fall Auction**, Tallmadge OH

November 2, 2008 <http://www.gaas-fish.net/> Bud White (330) 848-3866 - [bud@gaas-fish.net](mailto:bud@gaas-fish.net)

Reptile Swaps by Expo Mart - Monroeville, Pa  
Call - Herb Ellerbach



# Greater Pittsburgh Aquarium Society Inc.



**Monthly Meetings:** General meetings are held at the **Phipps Garden Center** in Mellon Park at the corner of **5<sup>th</sup> and Shady** Avenues. DOORS OPEN AT 7PM

2008 Meeting Dates: Jan 25, Feb 29, Mar 28, Apr 25, May 30, June 27, July 25, Aug 29, Sept 26, Oct 26, Nov 16

Board of Directors meetings are held at 7pm at Elmer's Aquarium in Monroeville. All members and suggestions are welcome. Contact a board member for meeting confirmation.

Dates: Jan 14, Feb 11, Mar 10, Apr 14, May 10, June 9, July 14, Aug 11, Sept 8, Oct 6, Nov 3, Dec 8

## Executive

President:	Bill Sensor	724-845-7171
Vice-President:	Don Tuttle	724-327-5163
Treasurer:	Sue Solito	412-571-2418
Recording Secretary:	Marlene Scholze	412-682-2711
Membership Secretary:	Steve Gibbs	412-531-2785

## Board of Directors

### Terms Expiring:

### Jan 2010

Steve Kingsley	412-882-8458
Bill Shenefelt	724-864-0582
Thomas Dew	724-845-4612
Max Okabayashi	Junior Board Member

### Terms Expiring:

### Jan 2009

Jim Davidson	412-781-3938
Stacy Gatto	412-798-3520
Armand Sichi	724-243-3313
Stan Chechak	412-882-0979
Steve Okabayashi	412-362-7018

## Committee Chairs

AHAP	Tim Gross & Bill Wells	412-771-6364 412-833-2569
BAP	Chuck Bialon	412-487-2378
Auction	Joe Krajcovic	412-680-8240
Junior Program	Marlene Scholze	412-682-2711
FAAS Rep & Newsletter Exchange	Armand Sichi	724-243-3313
Fundraising	Mike Solito	412-571-2418
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Newsletter	Steve Okabayashi & Lynn Zombeck	412-362-7018 412-279-2362
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Refreshments	Judi Kingsley	
Show	Bill Sensor	724-845-7171
Web	Bill Sensor JR & Bill Shenefelt	
Zoo	Marlene Scholze	412-682-2711

## Contact the Newsletter:

Please send articles or comments to:  
GPASI Newsletter PO Box 22452, Pittsburgh PA  
15222-0452

**Back issues of *Finformation* are available in full color online at:**

**[www.gpasi.org/newsletter.html](http://www.gpasi.org/newsletter.html)**

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The following national businesses and our local sponsors (listed on the back cover) have given GPASI the fuel it needs to have a great year. Please support all of our sponsors and thanks them for helping to make our club a success.

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[www.kingfishservices.net](http://www.kingfishservices.net)

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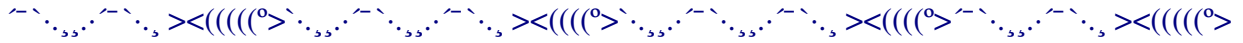
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Blacksburg, VA





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Aqua-World Pet Super Center	8143 Ohio River Blvd. Emsworth	(412) 732-9100
Elmer's Aquarium & Pet Center	4005 William Penn Highway, Monroeville	(412) 372-6535
In Leafy Shadows Jewelry Home Parties	inleafyshadow@yahoo.com	(412) 263-1638
Pet Supplies "Plus"	4714 McKnight Road, Pittsburgh	(412) 369-7350
Pet Supply Warehouse	Roseytown Road, Greensburg	(724) 834-0500
Petland	Miracle Mile Shopping Ctr., Monroeville	(412) 380-2522
Seahorse, Inc.	4906 Route 8, Allison Park, PA 15101	(724) 443-2920
Shene's Killies	sheneskillies.com	(724) 864-0582
Walt's Water World	4151 Grandview Dr., Gibsonia	(724) 449-9651



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