

# CICHLID BLUES

Issue #177

September 2011

*Newsletter of the Pacific Coast Cichlid Association*



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# CICHLID BLUES

Newsletter of the Pacific Coast Cichlid Association

www.cichlidworld.com

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# NOTES & NEWS

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## Editor's Notes...

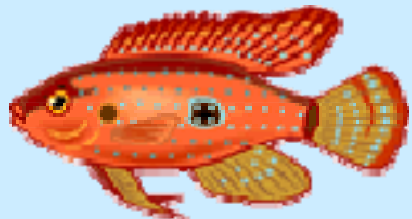
1. Last issue that Jim has to do (déjà vu all over again)
2. Da Prez was on his yearly outing to Cancun, lucky SOB.
3. Sarah Roberts will be coming to talk about EXPENSIVE Tanganyikans.
4. Kevin is off the deep end, again.
5. Don't let Dave touch your computer, iPhone, iPad or anything else tech, he's libel to break it.

- Ed.

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

AS OF SEPTEMBER 7, 2011

CURRENT MEMBERS	92
SINGLE MEMBERS	74
FAMILY MEMBERS	5
LIFE MEMBERS	10
CORPORATE MEMBERS	3



# THE PREZ MESS

## The Prez Mess...

By David Powell

Summer is quickly coming to an end and I am left wondering what happened to August! Between work, vacation, work, back to school shopping, and work, August has just flown by. Well, my long work weeks are behind me and my company released its product on time so now I can get back to paying attention to my fish. Speaking of fish, while on vacation in Cancun, I got a chance to go snorkeling with the largest fish in the world. Last month my father and I (his personal mosquito magnet), went down to our favorite resort near Cancun. It was hot and humid but the golf course was beautiful and the week off was relaxing. On my last day there, I was able to go out snorkeling with the Whale Sharks. It was an amazing experience. From above water, they look big. From underwater, they are just breath taking. I had the privilege to get “bumped” out of the way and tail slapped by the largest whale shark we saw that day. It was just over 10 meters long which would put it at about 20 tons. It is very humbling to be in the water next to a fish this big.



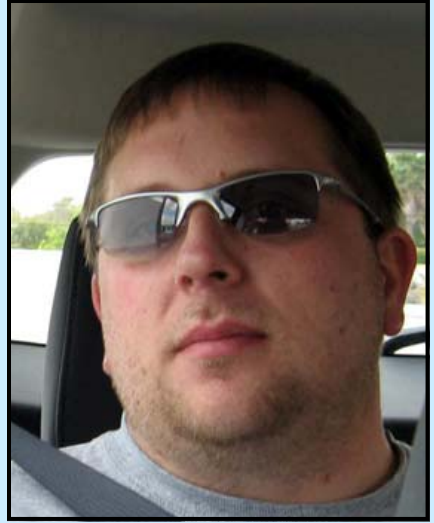
I'd like to give a big thank you to our summer speakers. I have missed the last two meetings due to vacations and family stuff but I hear that they went very well. Next week we have Sarah Roberts coming to talk to us about Lake Tanganyika. If you love those silver fish as much as Rich does, this will be one of those talks that you don't want to miss. Please watch our website for who the speakers will be for the October and November meetings. We will also post there if we will be having a December meeting or not. Harry's Hofbrau has another group that normally uses the meeting room on the second Saturday in December for a company party. At this point in time we still have not been able to confirm if we will be able to use the room.

Happy fish keeping!

*David*

# ENTIRELY LOST

## Entirely Lost: Inane Ramblings Of a Novice Fishkeeper By David Fraguglia



Wow, September is here already. In a few short months it is going to be cold and rainy again here in the bay area. Not like it hasn't been cool, this has been quite a relaxed summer. Now should be the time that we should be looking to our tanks that we've neglected all summer long to enjoy the sun and trips. Make sure that the heaters are in working order, filters are clean, nothing is leaking, etc. Just the basic maintenance that ends up being neglected through the summer months.

Now on to something more fun. ACA was quite memorable this year, I know everyone got to read a bit about it with Pam Chin's column in the Communiqué this past month. I can't tell you just how much of a blast they are each year. Next year is in Indianapolis, and it is looking to be just as good. Coming in November there are two impressive conventions coming up. First, FOTAS (Federation of Texas Aquarium Societies) is having its annual convention the first weekend in November. It is being hosted by the Hill Country Cichlid Club with one of the most impressive speaker line ups I've seen in years. This shouldn't be missed! Secondly, in the third weekend of November, The Ohio Cichlid Extravaganza is occurring, it is at the same place every year. I am sure it will turn out to be another fantastic convention.

Alas, the fates have been conspiring against me, I get to write this little mini column on my iPad, since the MacBook Pro and the desk top decided to break. Perhaps November will be a better for me! Don't forget to re-up your membership also!

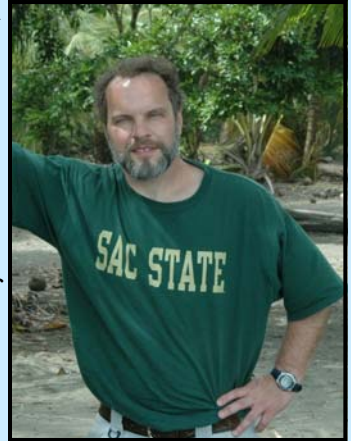
*Dave*

# REFLECTIONS

## Reflections: Lessons Learned at the Salton Sea

by Ron Coleman

A few months ago I introduced Cichlid Blues readers to the amazing cichlids of the Salton Sea and the project in our lab to study them. Here is a bit of an update. Since that time, Shannon Waters (a graduate student in my lab) and I have made two “expeditions” to collect tilapia in the Salton Sea to bring them back to the lab for her experiments. We have learned many things, some unique to these fish, but many were old lessons that need to be relearned every few years.



Recall that the Salton Sea is a 35 mile long inland body of water, a few hours drive east of Los Angeles, with salinity above 40 parts per thousand (ppt). It is just a few miles southeast of Palm Desert and that alone should give you some idea of the environment. It is hot, dry and rather barren. We made our first trip in late May and then returned again in early August.

In May – never having been there – I didn’t know what to expect. It is a common thread of all collecting trips that no matter how much you read or prepare, even if you see photos or videos, you learn more in the first five minutes of actually being there than you learned in most of your pre-trip preparation. We brought all sorts of fishing gear – seine nets, landing nets, hand nets, cast nets, lift nets, minnow traps etc. We brought large coolers to bring the fish back. We brought a power inverter and an air pump to keep them oxygenated during the 10 hour drive. And then we got there.

The first thing you realize when you go fish collecting is how

# REFLECTIONS

limited people are in our ability to interact with the water. Yes, we can bring all sorts of equipment and technology, but ultimately humans are just not very good in the water. We might plan and scheme but, with a few flicks of its tail, a fish can quickly be in deeper water, or around the end of a net, and there is little you can do about it.

When we first got there, with the help of Jack of California Fish and Game, we sized up the situation. We walked down onto one of the piers next to the boat launch and there, all over the wood, were the carcasses of dead tilapia left there by fishermen (likely including both the human kind and birds).

Initially Jack had suggested that we should angle for the tilapia, after all that is what everyone else did. That would certainly work, but our goal was to capture small adult male and female tilapia and angling would exclude the latter. Why? Because they are mouthbrooders and female mouthbrooders typically do not feed, let alone go after a hook. Interestingly, we had been told that the sex ratio in the Salton Sea was heavily male-biased. I wonder if that was because they sampled by hook and line???

I brought along my usual tonnage of underwater camera equipment, ready to shoot stunning photos and video of tilapia in the “wild”. One view of the actual Salton Sea told me that underwater photography was just not going to happen. The water was green and murky and visibility was an inch or two. Nix the photos. As an aside, “good visibility” is very much dependent on who you are and what you are used to. In my travels, I have had people tell me about places where “the fish were good but visibility was awful”. Of course, if their standard was blue-hole visibility in the Caribbean where you can see for 30-50 feet, then typical river visibility of two to three feet simply sucks. For me, if I can see two to three feet in a river, I consider that pretty good. Ten-foot visibility is AMAZING and seldom found in freshwater, except of course for totally lifeless waters, in which case, it doesn’t really matter (at least to me!) – the water is clear because it is lifeless. Inch or two visibility is terrible in anybody’s books.

# REFLECTIONS

We tried lift nets. A lift net is a flat square net about a yard on each side that you lie on the bottom and lift on a central frame to capture small fish. It works really well on livebearers and other fish unencumbered by much mental capacity. Cichlids laugh at you if you try to use a lift net on them. They are long gone before the net even hits the water. Cichlids can also be hard to catch in a beach seine because once they feel the net in the water, they are gone around the end or through any tiny crack between the seine and the bottom. Our efforts with the beach seine did yield hundreds of fry that were schooling in the shallows, that is until we lifted the net and discovered that the fry could slide through even rather fine mesh. We did get some, however, and that was a start.

It was looking pretty grim for catching adults until we tried the cast nets. Recall that the visibility was non-existent. Just as with so many things in life, your greatest obstacle can also be your greatest advantage if you just look at it differently. While we could not see the fish (to take photos or data underwater), the fish could not see us either. A 12 foot diameter cast net dropped straight down off one of the piers directly over 6 foot deep water proved to be incredibly effective at catching adult male and female tilapia. The tilapia might hear and feel the net hit the water, but they don't know which way to run and we rapidly caught as many adults as we could handle. Interestingly, we even caught females that were mouthbrooding. One of the females was so tenacious at motherhood that she never let go of her kids through the cast-netting, being handled and placed in a bucket then packed in a cooler and driven to Sacramento. It was 10 hours later, when she was placed in an aquarium back in the lab, that she finally relented and released her fry. I have to admit, though these are hybrid, introduced fish that have no business in California, the efforts of that female to protect her young certainly earned my respect and admiration.

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# BAP STANDING

By Jim Ellenberger

BAP Lite special for September is still South American Cichlids. Starting in October and running thru the end of the year, the BAP Lite special will be African Cichlids.

Submissions have been a little off during the summer but I'm sure they will start to pick up.

- Jim

## BAP REPORT & POINT SUMMARY

### Current Point Totals -- As of September 8, 2011

<i>Bireley, Rich</i> .....	770	<i>Bousfield, Dan</i> .....	190	Cain, Bill and Tessa.....	3810
Chin Family .....	21255	Coleman, Ron .....	2302	Di Meo, Sonny .....	140
Ellenberger, Jim.....	14577	Fraguglia, Dave .....	140	Gale, Mike .....	50
Hansen, Troy .....	1795	<i>Hooks, Roger</i> .....	<b>5645</b>	Hopp, David .....	2872
Huerta, Eric.....	50	Kennedy, John .....	230	Kennedy, Warren.....	1210
Lambert, John .....	980	Mader, Rolf.....	3010	Mortensen, Michael.....	298
<i>Plante, Leo</i> .....	<b>1710</b>	Plazak, Kevin.....	6070	Powell, David .....	160
Rambo, Chuck .....	5005	Rinck, Mike .....	365	Ritchie, Forrest.....	695
<i>Sasakado, Toshiyuki</i> .....	<b>1343</b>	Smith, Vern.....	830	Spielman, Daniel .....	2423
Tomassello, Mark .....	1665	Tu, Anthony.....	9178	Zadnik, Kurt .....	7535

### Point Changes in *Italics*

#### Largest Point Increase – Rich Bireley 595 to 770 a 175 point increase

These are the current point totals as computed by the BAP Committee Chairperson. If you have any questions, please see the Chairperson at the membership meetings, or contact the Chairperson at the phone number listed on page 2 of the *Cichlid Blues*. Any participants not in good membership standing will be deleted from the BAP points report after a one issue grace period.

# FISH MARKET

Members may have 10 lines of advertising free. Additional lines cost 50 cents each. Equipment may also be listed. The PCCA cannot guarantee the quality of items advertised here.

Send your Ads to:

**David Fraguglia**

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Sunnyvale, CA 94087

[d\\_frag@yahoo.com](mailto:d_frag@yahoo.com)

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Roger Hooks

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[Rogerhooks78@yahoo.com](mailto:Rogerhooks78@yahoo.com)

Sciaenochromis fryeri "electric blue" .....	2"	\$2.00 ea.
Sciaenochromis fryeri "electric blue" .....	5"M 4"F \$	20.00 pr.
Lamprologus multifasciatus .....	1"	\$2.00 ea.
Neolamprologus tetrocephalus .....	4"	\$15.00 ea.
Altolamprologus compressiceps "ink fin" .....	4"M	\$15.00 ea.
Paralabidochromis sp. "fire red Uganda" .....	4"M 3"F	\$15.00 pr.
Lepidolamprologus hecke .....	4"M 3"F \$	15.00 pr.
Synodontis multipunctatus .....	4" M	\$20.00 ea.
Aulonocara Sp. "German red" .....	4"F	\$10.00 ea.
Aulonocara Sp. "Eureka Red" .....	6"M	\$15.00 ea.
Neolamprologus leleupi .....	1"	\$2.00 ea.
Neolamprologus pulcher "daffodil" .....	1"	\$2.00 ea.
Enantiopus Sp. "kileasa" .....	4" M	\$30.00 ea.



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# NEW MEMBERS

## Welcome New PCCA Members

Many of you may be reading this issue for the first time as a PCCA member. This space has been designated to both welcome you and introduce you to some of the benefits and services available to you.

First, you should check the mailing label on the cover to see that your expiration date is correct. If it is different from your expectations you should contact the Membership Chairperson noted on page two of this newsletter.

With that out of the way, a list of club services and benefits are in order.

### MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

All PCCA members may participate in regular Membership Meetings, supply items for the auction, run tabs to purchase auction items and utilize other club resources.

### PUBLICATIONS

On every even numbered month, each member will receive the *Cichlidae Communiqué*. This award-winning journal is supplemented on the odd numbered months with the *Cichlid Blues*, quite possibly the finest blue newsletter in the entire world.

### CONTESTS, EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

Members are also eligible to participate in club sponsored events such as field trips to other area clubs, seminars on aquarium related subjects, conferences and work-shops.

Additional member benefits include a Breeders Awards Program whose standings are listed in the *Cichlid Blues*, the finest, all blue aquarium related journal ever.

## PCCA

P.O. Box 28145  
San Jose, CA 95159-8145

## Membership Application

### Membership Dues

		<u>Printed</u>	<u>Emailed</u>
Single:	One Year	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15
	Two Year	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25
Family:	One Year	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20
	Two Year	<input type="checkbox"/> \$45	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
Foreign:	One Year	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15

Foreign includes all locations outside the North American Continent.

### Members Receive:

*Cichlidae communiqué*  
PCCA Journal, Bimonthly  
*Cichlid Blues*, PCCA Newsletter, Bimonthly (emailed)  
Free Fishmarket Advertising,  
Both publications

- New Member    Renewal  
 Change of Address

Name:

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Street:

---

---

City:

---

---

Telephone:

---

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Email (required):

***September 10, 2011***

***Sara Roberts***

***"Petrochromis, Tropheus, and  
some other Oddballs"***



**Meeting starts sometime around  
7:00 pm**

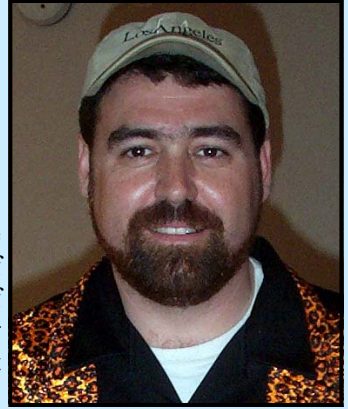
**Social time starts at 5:00 pm**

**Harry's Hofbrau**

**390 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose, CA**

# THE LAST WORD

## The Last Word By Kevin Plazak



I have been offered more interesting species of cichlids in the last year than any prior year since I have been in business. The fish are out there - loads of them. There are fish I have only ever dreamed of seeing that are being shipped to countries all over the world and most of the really weird stuff is not getting to the US. There are a number of good reasons why but I would like to unveil a little business magic that many of you may not know that will get these fish back into the US market -- we will use very broad brush strokes but the truth of it will be fairly painted...

When you spend your money -- you are looking for the best value. Value is reasonably defined as "the monetary worth of something". If the cichlid is priced at PetCo for \$5.00 and at your local fish store (LFS) for \$6.00 the best value would be the PetCo fish, right? Well... probably not.

See, the local fish store probably purchased that fish for \$2.00 from Pan Ocean or River City or Golden Phoenix -- all local wholesalers. Of that \$2.00, \$1.25 probably went to paying rent, wages and bills to the local economy. The store charging that \$4.00 mark up spent their money on wages, rent and bills locally as well. So of the \$6.00 you pay, most of that money goes to wages of the business owner, the employees and money into the local landlords; electrical and water bills that are local as well. Most of the money stays right in your area -- and with a fish, close to 75% of what you pay gets spent locally keeping the money churning in your area giving you benefits beyond just the fish you bought.

So the value of that \$6.00 fish -- the "monetary worth" of that \$6.00 fish is the fish AND more money in your community. Multiply this by all the fish that could be sold through LFS rather than PetCo and the numbers start becoming significant to your community.

The fish sitting at your local PetCo will have been purchased outside your area so it is gone. No value is added to your local economy -- it is actually going to leave your economy. But since it is being paid for outside your local economy, no net

# THE LAST WORD

loss but there has been no gain so value is lost. There is a fish swimming in your local PetCo without having improved the local economy. The LFS did help the local economy with its purchase whereas the PetCo failed to do the same. And yes, there are stores putting much of their money in the pockets of Southern California companies... but that is not the rule, it is the exception.

Moving on...

PetCo then has most of its overhead of that fish in the form of expenses generated outside your local community by paying corporate wages, corporate delivery of the fish to their stores, District Managers, Regional Managers, etc... most of the sale price of that fish will leave the local area. MOST OF THE COST of that fish to you is value leaving your community. You will pay less BUT you will get less value by spending your money at a PetCo than a LFS.

When you buy a fish at a local store, there is a chance that the store will increase its fish buying budget and be able to afford more interesting fish since there is more money in the local economy for fish. And since PetCo can only buy a fixed number of items from sources that mostly sell a fixed number of items, you will never, ever see a soda cichlid or a Blue Firemouth (*Amphilophus robertsoni*) or a Scarlet Krib (*Pelvicachromis sacramontis*) or any number of commonly available yet rarely seen fish. And every penny that is thrown at the feet of this giant will forever remove more species from the hobby which in turn slowly kills the hobby. Where is the value in that long term goal??

The magic is using your money to buy fish with value built in to the price rather than the actual price. It seems obvious that spending \$5.00 rather than \$6.00 is the better value but it is not always the case. Monetary worth defines value and thoughtful use of your money can increase your chance of actually seeing all the species worth seeing at some point. As it stands, the money that used to be in the hobby is slowly being siphoned away -- lost for all times. Consider your LFS as the last stoneworks left in the hobby -- because it is.

*Kevin*