

Florida Tropical Fish Farmers Association Breeder's Award

The FTFFA's annual show is for professional fish farmers. Here Rick receives the Breeder's Award trophy from Allan Levey of the Wardley Corp. for *Ps. saulosi*.



Rick and Tamela Biro were photographed at a FTFFA Awards Banquet.

CICHLID *News*

GUEST COMMENTARY—SOUTH FLORIDA FARMERS STEP UP AT ANNUAL FISH SHOW

Text by Laif DeMason

Travelling through areas around Homestead, Florida still reminds one a "war zone," complete with caved-in storefronts, rubble-laden side roads, abandoned houses, and treeless landscapes—all a persistent reminder of the wrath of Hurricane Andrew. While rebuilding is underway, recovery is far from complete; resident fish farms are no exception to this assessment, as stocks are now critically low as a result of losses to Andrew and seasonal sales in early 1993.

Although for most Americans Hurricane Andrew may be a faint memory, its effects are still being felt by South Florida fish farmers. So it is with some degree of pride that I'm able to report on not only the participation in, but also the fine showing of South Florida farmers in the 15th Annual Professional Tropical Fish Show sponsored by the Florida Tropical Fish Farmers' Association (FTFFA) in Tampa on March 13-14 of this year. Pride in competition was the cornerstone of the show. As one Homestead farmer put it, "I haven't shipped since the hurricane, but I'm showing fish here just to let people know I'm still around!"

The FTFFA's annual show is for professional fish farmers. Basically, the

rules are: 1) you must be a member of the FTFFA to enter; and 2) you must produce on location in Florida all fishes entered in the show. There are 44 categories or "classes" in the show (including an overall award for "Best-of-Show"), representing all freshwater fishes, plants, and other aquatic animals cultured in Florida. First-, second-, and third-place trophies are given in each class. Overall, there were 523 entries this year and a total of 131 trophies awarded. Of these, South Florida farmers took home 28 trophies, or over 20% of the total awarded. Considering only those categories entered—classes for mollies, African cichlids, angelfish, koi and goldfish, and, of course, the Breeder's and Best-New-Egg-layer categories—South Florida representatives won a whopping 28 of 41 awards.



Homestead fish farmer Rick Biro receives the Breeder's Award trophy from Allan Levey of the Wardley Corp. for *Pseudotropheus saulosi*. Photo by H. Grier, courtesy of FTFFA.



Ophthalmotilapia nasutus Kipili received the prestigious "Best-of-Show" award. Photo by H. Grier, courtesy of FTFFA.

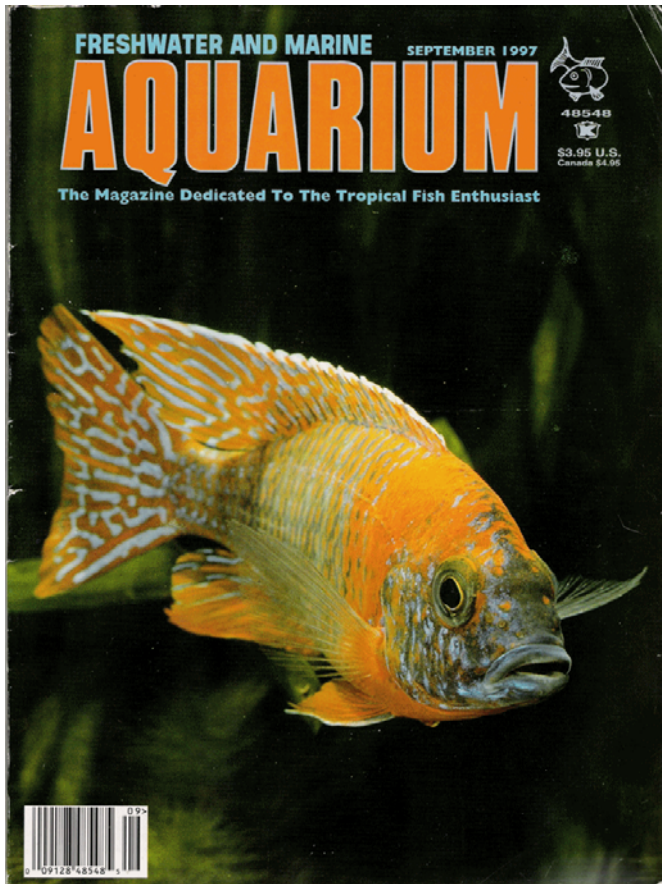


Haplochromis lepturus "yellow" won first-place in the "Malawi Haplochromine" class. Photo by H. Grier, courtesy of FTFFA.

Freshwater and Marine

Aquarium

The Magazine Dedicated To The Tropical Fish Enthusiast



September 1997

This month's cover: Features the red-sided *Aulonocara* sp. Raised at Florida Exotic Fish Sales by Rick and Tamela Biro. It is not a wild species, as the coloration is due to selective breeding. This color variation is being used to enhance the color of Albino Peacocks produced from wild stock imported from Mbenji Island, Lake Malawi, Africa.

Photo by Harry Grier.

Freshwater and Marine

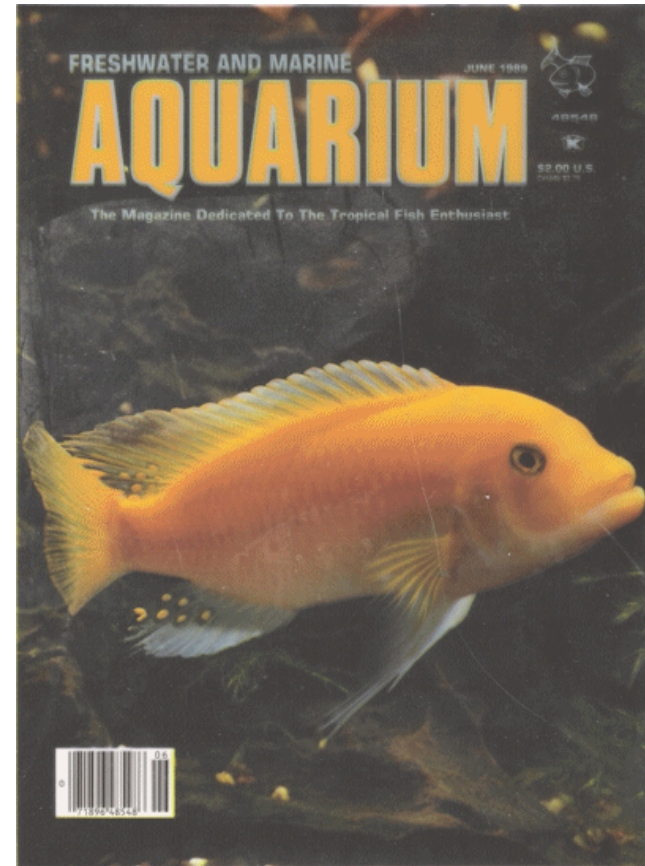
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Red Zebra — June 1989 Cover

Another award winning specie from Lake Malawi, Africa bred on the So. Florida farm of Florida Exotic Fish Sales.

This specimen is actually of better color than the wild version because it eats a special diet created to enhance color, breeding performance and the fishes health.



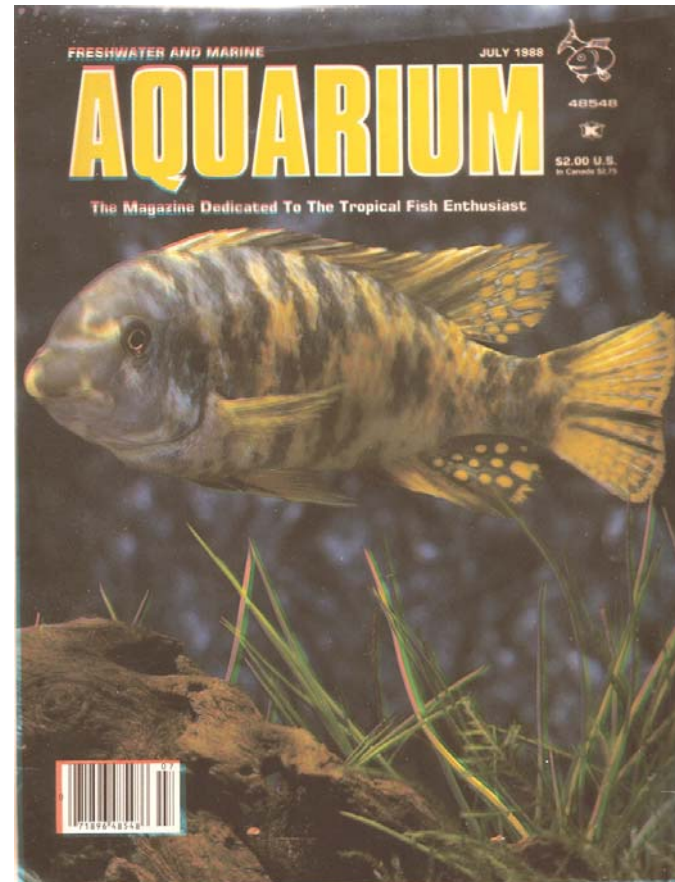
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July 1988 cover

L. fuelleborni was among the first specie of the *Labeotropheus* fishes imported from Lake Malawi in the early 70's. It was an immediate success and sought after by hobbyists and breeders world-wide. The marmalade *fuelleborni* won the "Best of Show" award at the Florida Tropical Fish Farmers Association industry wide competition and was photographed for Aquarium Magazine in 1988.





ALBINO PEACOCKS - Development Of The Strain

By Harry Grier, Ph.D.



LEFT: A pair of Albino Peacocks. The female is the smaller fish. Development of the strain began in 1984 from wild-caught Peacocks originating from Shweta Island, Lake Malawi. ABOVE: A pair of wild Albino Peacocks. Golden egg seen above the male fish, as in all Peacocks.

The great egg, Florida Peacock. This takes a number of Albino Peacocks, *Aequidens paraguayensis*, into the belly at the annual Florida Tropical

Fish Forum Association (TFHA) International Fish Show that was held between March 5-7, 1987. Long Head SMALL advertisement also here and of these

back issues, cataloged the above article by adding to it in July 1987. In 1988, the amazing Albino Peacock was first shown at F.A.N.E.'s event, and by



LEFT: A wild male Imperial Yellow Peacock from Shweta Island. In the first showing of Albino Peacocks, an Albino-male was found. POINT: Malawi Albinism's controls were developed in Belgium.



The intermediate, red-eyed Peacock is also bred by Niall from a female of wild from Malawi. Albino Peacocks are being produced in this strain in order to enhance the color of the Albino strain and helpfully, consider the fact in representative journals of the A.S.A. that resulted have interesting

relationships with fish breeders. "The New Eggheads" Class for Rock and Variable Blue, owners of Florida Tropical Fish Forum, and developers of the Yellow Peacock. Eventually, I began looking about for fish breeders who had Peacocks, and who was in contact with them. These breeders contacted me to sell W.A.K. items, who graciously sent me some fish to photograph for the F.A.N.E. history.

For the next few years, as I continue, take the colorful fish that are available to me for genetic relationships to their origins. There is always an album in

...read an excerpt from this article on the following page.



Rick and Tamela Biro were photographed at a FTFFA Awards Banquet.

available in our aquarium literature about how fish strains are developed. The skilled breeders who develop exotic strains of aquarium fish, command almost no media attention. Because of the FTFFA Professional Fish Show, Albino Peacocks received national attention when they were first introduced. What follows is a brief accounting on how the strain was developed by Rick and Tamela Biro, owners of Florida Exotic Fish Sales.

Albinism is one of the most common recessive mutations encountered in our hobby, although it occurs infrequently in the wild. Mutations such as albinism, that may have little survival value in the wild, do have great survival value in the tropical fish hobby because it is a trait that we, as humans, desire in our aquarium fish.

The original strain of Albino Peacock that was offered to hobbyists a decade ago, was the result of a natural recessive mutation carried by the first Imperial Yellow Peacocks collected in the waters around Mbenji Island, Lake Malawi, Africa, and shipped to the United States.

Albino Peacocks were never imported from Lake Malawi, Africa, but a new Peacock, native to the waters around Mbenji Island in Lake Malawi, was. According to Rick Biro, the new strain of Peacock was called "Imperial Yellow Peacocks." Hidden among the genes of the first wild-type Imperial Yellow Peacocks was the gene for albinism; albinos were found in the first spawns of these Peacocks -- about a dozen males. Their appearance was followed by an intensive two-year breeding program at Florida Exotic Fish Sales. The albino strain initially proved to be quite prolific.

Sufficient stocks were built so that they were introduced in 1987 and entered into the FTFFA Professional Fish Show. There, they won in the Best New Egg layer Class and were the featured fish on FAMA's cover.

From this article...

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