

KILLIE NEWS

A Publication of the Minnesota Killie Keepers Association
An affiliate of the American Killifish Association (AKA)

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Minnesota Killie Keepers Association
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From the Editor:

I am pleased to tell you we have THREE articles this month! Wow, does that ever make my job easier. As always Bob's article is an interesting way to look at something you might not think is fish related. We also have two articles on some interesting Rivulus species. Of course I tend to like "ugly" fish, so you'll just have to see for yourself.

If you have any ideas about something you'd like to see in this newsletter, please don't hesitate to let me know. Articles, pictures, artwork and general information that other members might find interesting are always welcome. Email me at raqbe@usinternet.com. This newsletter is for the entire club and I welcome your ideas and suggestions.

Happy fish keeping!

Robin

The May 15th meeting was at the home of Bob Carter. We want to thank Bob for his hospitality (and the tacos – my favorite!)

Present at the meeting were: Jason Albers, John Aldrich, Randy Bates, Bob Carter, Robin Engelking, Frank Grund, Kelly Huesmann & son, Jake, Ted Jolivette, Margie Johnson, Mike Kromrey, Jen Kruckenberg, Dick Lauer, Carter McAninch, Craig Rees, Milo Squires and Pat Whitney.

We want to welcome new member **Frank Grund** to the club. We look forward to seeing you at many more meetings!

We also have a new member from New Jersey. We want to welcome Vyacheslav Ivanof. He goes by **Steve**. He and Craig have been exchanging emails. He will be sending us fish in lieu of cash to pay for his membership. See the Communications section to see what he is sending.

Conversation with a CEO

By Bob Wolter

Wait a minute- what does this have to do with fish? Actually everything! Fear not dear reader, read on and you will find a great secret that you can apply to having a better and much more enjoyable hobby.

A number of years ago, I had the privilege of meeting the CEO of “Little Debbie”. I learned that Little Debbie, his daughter, is now a grown woman. I also learned that his method of successfully running his business could apply to anything, including anyone wanting to run a successful hobby.

First, need was determined. In starting his business, he checked with local convenience stores and local service stations to determine need. His trademark “nutty bars” grew out of a need for lower cost peanut butter cookie bars. After checking with possible suppliers he found that he could assemble and sell them for half the price. This lowered retail cost from 50 to 25 cents. They were made and shipped in a box that could be set up as a display. The bars were good and sold well.

He explained that adding a new product line costs thousands of dollars. Although the Nutty Bars were successful, he realized that he needed to expand. This he did slowly and carefully. Today; Little Debby is nationwide, has many products, and has a fleet of delivery vans. We can learn much from him.

Why don't our killies sell well? How many of use have actually gone to a pet shop **AND ASKED THEM WHAT THEY WANT**. This is really a “no brainer”, which no one bothers to do. Do it! If you have several good Killie Candidates to sell, how about selecting only one to start.

Write a list of what equipment will be needed to run this line:

1. 2 ½-Gallon Breeding Tanks - how many?
2. Small Hatching containers - how many?
3. Plastic Shoeboxes for growing hatched fry - how many?
4. 5 gallon medium growing tanks - how many?
5. 10-gallon larger growing out tanks - how many?

6. Optional 20-Gallon Long growing tanks
7. Accessories: Mops, Acriflaven, plastic plants, masking tape to label containers, air pump and sponge filters, live food cultures: micro worms and white worms, etc.

Clearly we can see that producing just one species will take a good deal of equipment. Adding a "second line" will double our equipment requirements and costs. Perhaps we, like the Little Debbie CEO, could let the profits of our first line pay for start up costs for the second line. This is just common sense!

We should ask ourselves if we really need a myriad of Killie Species. Do we need a myriad of *Gardneri* Sub Species? Yes, I have done it. My true confession is running both Jos Plateau and Misaje. One night, tired after a long day at work, I came home and picked mops. A week later, I discovered that I had labeled one of the containers GAR. Was this overflow from JOS or MSJ. I honestly didn't know! They had to be grown to adult size to tell. Had I only one *Gardneri*, I would not have had this problem. Learn from my mistake.

All the beautiful different types of killies are very tempting, but perhaps we should apply the brakes. True, being sensible requires a different mindset. Yes, I love killies but aren't I better off being sensible and limiting myself to a couple of "lines" that I can manage?

Auctions are very tempting. Maybe it's better for us to buy species that we already have? It's always good to have "New Blood" and a backup pair for those we have.

Killies can be kept in a community tank, PROVIDED there is a tight tank cover. They are beautiful to watch swim among Angelfish, Barbs, and White Clouds. We can keep them in a community tank to enjoy until we are ready to breed them.

What have we learned from the CEO? Be sensible, think long and hard before adding a "new line", and don't go overboard. Enjoy!

Minnesota's Two Native Killifish

by Jason Albers

In keeping with the "native fish" spirit of the season - the MAS Darter Hunt(s), the fishing opener, etc., I thought I'd chime in with some information about Minnesota's two native killifish species - *Fundulus sciadicus* - the Plains Topminnow, and *Fundulus diaphanus* - the Banded Killifish

The Plains Topminnow (*Fundulus sciadicus*) is found in a very limited area in the southwestern corner of the state, from streams which are tributaries to the Missouri River, in Rock County and Pipestone County. Because of its limited range in Minnesota, the DNR lists it as species of special concern, and collecting it (or any other "minnows") is prohibited in their range*.

Though I have not seen a live Plains Topminnow, pictures show it to be a streamlined fish with the characteristic protruding lower jaw of killifishes. It approaches 3 inches in length, and has a darkish olive color on the top, which transitions down the sides to a beautiful blue-green. The fins are fringed with yellow, which intensifies to an orange in males in breeding condition. It seems to prefer clear, quiet waters, with some vegetation. It spawns during the summer, with the females depositing the eggs amongst the vegetation. Pictures can be found at The Native Fish Conservancy photo gallery - <http://www.nativefish.org/Gallery/>. Just scroll down to *Fundulus sciadicus*.

Minnesota's other killifish, *Fundulus diaphanus*, the Banded Killifish, is found throughout most of the state, with the exception of the northeastern "arrowhead" portion. As of 2008 they have no special conservation status in Minnesota. The book "Fishes of the Minnesota Region" states their length as typically less than 4 inches; however, other sources have it as maxing out at about 5 inches. It gets its common name from the 12-20 vertical bars along its sides. Its diet consists of insects and other small aquatic animals. It prefers water that is shallow and weedy, with little current, and a sand or gravel substrate. In Minnesota it spawns throughout the summer months. The eggs are scattered amongst vegetation and over the substrate. A photo of this fish can also be found online at the Native Fish Conservancy. FishBase makes the remark that this is an easy fish to maintain in an aquarium. [I kept these fish for many years. They are very easy to maintain, but I never got them to spawn-Ed.] Although not very colorful, it has a patterning and "natural" look that make it attractive. That along with their potential size would make them an interesting and impressive fish to keep.

I have always been amazed by the reptiles, amphibians, and fish that are able to live through the wide variation of temperatures and conditions during a typical year here in Minnesota. It is testimony to the adaptability displayed by the killifishes that we have these two species native to our own waters.

Sources:

Gary L. Phillips, William D. Schmid, and James C. Underhill - Fishes of the Minnesota Region (1982) pp. 186-188

Carter R. Gilbert and James D. Williams - National Audubon Society Field Guide to Fishes Revised Edition North America (2002) pp. 251, 252, 255

Lawrence M. Page, Brooks M. Burr - Peterson Field Guides Freshwater Fishes North America North of Mexico (1991) pp. 216, 219

Websites:

<http://www.en.wikipedia.org> (Wikipedia in English)

<http://www.fishbase.org> (FishBase - all things fishy)

<http://www.nativefish.org> (The Native Fish Conservancy - well worth a visit!)

<http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/rlp/regulations/fishing/fishing2008.pdf> (Minnesota Fishing 2008 Regulations at the Minnesota DNR website)

*Minnesota Fishing 2008 Regulations states: All streams and associated tributaries and connected waters of the Missouri River watershed in Lincoln, Pipestone, Murray, Rock, or Nobles counties that lie south of U.S. Highway 14 to the Iowa border and west of U.S. Highway 59 to South Dakota are closed to minnow harvest.

A Rivulus Only a Mother Rivulus Could Love

by Craig Rees

Shanna Fought of Karma Farms Aquatics and I have been trading killifish pairs and eggs for a couple of years now. She has proven to be a very generous hobbyist. A pair of *Rivulus weberi* El Llano-Carti Road PBS 02/35 would barely produce any eggs or fry in her tanks. She offered them to me to see if they would spawn, with the condition that I would mail the pair back to her in the spring.

The pair arrived to me in good condition. They were about 3 1/2" in size and the brownest of brown. Pretty much butt ugly. No striking colors, markings, or patterns and there was not much distinction between the male and female. Many of the *Rivulus* females have the "rivulus spot" on the caudal which make *Rivulus* very easy to sex out at a young age - these did not.

They seemed very shy so they were given a 5 1/2 gallon tank on the bottom shelf on a rack in my bedroom. That darkened the tank enough to hopefully make them more at ease. Two mops were added for cover and I checked for eggs almost every day for the first couple of weeks. They were not prolific, but they did yield a few good eggs. The fry were huge as far as killie fry go. In fact, they were the largest fry I have ever raised. I had no problems with rearing the fry because they could take newly hatched baby brine shrimp (bbs).

The *Riv. weberi* gave me around a dozen fry that managed to grow up. I didn't have to do anything special for these killies. I gave them a tank with not much light, fed them blackworms and fruit flies and pretty much left them alone. It was very rare to see the male or female in their tank. Even at feeding time they hid out in the mops until I wasn't around.

Spring time came and I offered them back to Shanna, but she was not interested in having them again. She said that they did not spawn for her but they did for me so I should keep them. I think sometimes the hobbyist takes too much credit for what the fish do naturally. Otherwise they wouldn't be here on the planet all these thousands of years.

In our fishrooms we just need to do some little things once in awhile to help the fish spawn: water changes, adding some live foods to their diet, giving them the temperature range they like, giving them some cover and hiding places, separating the male and female, or moving the pair to a different tank sometime trigger them to spawn.

The West Coast Weekend show came up, so I sent the breeding pair to the show. I wanted to get them into the hands of someone that would really appreciate this *Rivulus*. It turns out that they went for a very high price in the auction. This probably happened for two reasons; they are very rare and there are some die hard *Rivulus* fans out there.

I was glad to pass them along. They weren't pretty!

June Club communications:

Club Business:

Milo will be giving a talk about "Everything You Wanted to Know About Brine Shrimp" at the June meeting.

MKKA will print cards with your name& email address if you want some business cards. That way when you talk to hobbyists about killies, you can give them a card with the club information on it and spread the word around about MKKA. Robin will bring some sample cards to the June meeting and you can place your orders then. We have a number of nice killie pictures for the front of the card.

Mike at Something Fishy is offering a free "membership" plus 10% off any purchase to MKKA members; just show one of our business cards at the store and ask for the discount.

Craig Rees is working with Greg Simpson on putting together a Gary & Andy cartoon 2009 calendar. We would like to make it a 13 or 14 month wall calendar. Greg's art work is unique and it would be great for our club members to have. The club could send it to the AKA affiliate clubs for Christmas and some of the pet stores might be interested in hanging one up in their shop. We will check into printing costs and give you more details in upcoming issues.

Kudos:

We want to thank **Randy Bates** for donating a case of printing paper to MKKA. He gave it to Craig at the MAS show. Randy works for a printing company.

MKKA member **Bob Wolter** took AKA certification tests at the 2008 Convention and passed the general, Blue Gularis, Fundulopanchax, and Aphyosemion classes.

Congrats to Bob! Bob lives in Wisconsin and is also is WAKO member. He will be attending the MKKA 2008 Fall Annual Show. We look forward to seeing him there.

Fish and Plants Available:

If anyone is interested in some nice unsexed lampeyes, Craig Rees has a source for *Aplocheilus luxophthalmus* Hannerzi. They mature at about 2", are a good community fish and are prolific spawners. They like a temperature range of 70-80° with about a tablespoon of salt per 10 gallons of water and somewhat alkaline water. Email Craig at www.killifish777@comcast.com if you are interested.

Our newest member Steven, (Vyacheslav Ivanof) is sending three pairs of killies (of two different species) as payment for his membership in MKKA. They will be auctioned off at the June MKKA meeting.

Here's what he sent:

2 pairs *Rivulus deltaphilus* (rare)

1 pair *Scriptaphyosemion etzeli* Lungi Lol SL 99/10 (very uncommon)

Upcoming Affiliate Shows:

Upcoming AKA affiliate show: Texas Area Killie Organization (TAKO), July 12th & 13th. If anyone has any killies to send to the show, bring them to the MKKA meeting at Milo's. Craig can tank them until he ships them to their show.

Wanted:

Java Moss, if you have some to spare. Please bring to the June MKKA meeting.

Thanks, Craig Rees

Websites of Interest to Killie Keepers:

Dave Ramsey has a website for anyone looking for some nice killies. Check http://www.djramsey.com/tropfish/fish_for_sale.htm for the current list.

Shannon Fought has a web site. She is sponsoring show class 1. Check out her site at www.karmafarmaquatics.net.

Class sponsors 2008

Class 1	Shannon Fought	paid
Class 2	open	
Class 3	open	
Class 4	Bob Carter	paid
Class 5	open	
Class 6	Jenny Kruckenberg	not paid
Class 7	Carter McAninch	not paid
Class 8	Craig Rees	paid
Class 9	Mike & Erin Kromrey	paid
Class 10	Milo Squires	not paid
Class 11	open	
Class 12	John Aldrich	not paid
Class 13	Milo Squires	not paid
Best of Show	MKKA	

Some MKKA 2008 show class sponsorships' are still available. Sponsorships are \$20 for each class. Your name will be on the award as class sponsor. Sponsorships will help offset some of the show costs. If interested, email Craig Rees at killifish777@comcast.net.

Directions to Milo's house

From the North or East – Take 494 to Eden Prairie. Then go west on Hwy 5 through Chanhassen to Hwy 41. Go south (left) on Hwy 41 to Engler Blvd (Hwy 10). Go east (left) on Engler Blvd two blocks to Park Ridge Drive. Go north (left) on Park Ridge Drive two blocks to Park Ridge Circle.

From the South – Take Hwy 169 to Hwy 41. Go north on Hwy 41 up the hill to Engler blvd. Go east (right) on Engler Blvd two blocks to Park Ridge Drive. Go north (left) on Park Ridge Drive two blocks to Park Ridge Circle.

From the West – Take Hwy 7, 5 or 212 to Hwy 41. Go south (north from 212) on Hwy 41 to Engler Blvd. Go east (left [right from 212]) on Engler two blocks to Park Ridge Drive. Go north (left) on Park Ridge Drive two blocks to Park Ridge Circle.

1811 Park Ridge Circle, Chaska
952-488-9553

MKKA 2008 Calendar of Events:

Saturday April 19, 2008 was at the home of Bruce Cameron.

Social time started at 7:00 pm and the meeting started at 7:30 pm. 651-633-6484

Thursday, May 15, 2008 was at the home of Bob Carter

Social time started at 7:00 pm and the meeting started at 8:00 pm. 651-633-4351

Thursday, June 19, 2008 is scheduled to be at the home of Milo Squires.

Social time starts at 7:00 pm and the meeting starts at 7:30 pm. 952-448-4153

Saturday July 12, 2008, is scheduled to be at the home of Mike and Erin Kromrey

Social time starts at 4:00 pm and the meeting starts at 4:30 pm.

Saturday August 9, 2008 will be a ROAD TRIP to visit Tom Kean in Minot ND. We will leave Saturday August 9th and return Sunday August 10th. Tom has been a member of our club for many years and has a special fondness for the Diapterons and for Nothobranchius. Put it on you calendar (or at least keep the trip in mind for now).

Friday September 12, 2008 is the day we will be doing the show set-up.

Saturday September 13, 2008 is the 15th annual MKKA killifish show.

Sunday September 14, 2008 is the fish auction and show teardown.

Thursday, September 18, 2008 is scheduled to be at the home of Robin Engelking

Social time starts at 7:00 pm and the meeting starts at 7:30 pm. This is the post-show meeting. 763-560-5038.

Thursday, October 16, 2008 is scheduled to be at the home of Craig Rees.

Social time starts at 7:00 pm and the meeting starts at 7:30 pm 952-403-6038.

Thursday, November 20, 2008 is scheduled to be at the home of Jen Kruckenberg. We will take nominations for Board members for the 2009 year. 651-457-2302.

Thursday, December 18, 2008 is scheduled to be at the home of Milo Squires. We need to elect officers this month.

952-448-4153.