Hi – Fin

May 2010

Pelvicachromis pulcher

Fish of the month

Photograph by: Udo Rohmann

Presidents Message

Tim Antler, will be acting President for the balance of the term.

Editor's Message

The CAOAC Convention is just around the corner. For those of you who have not attended a Convention this is a good opportunity, this year's Convention is in Oakville. As you all know that means this club season is coming to a close. I hope all of you will consider running for one of the club positions in the upcoming election (June)! In this May's issue we have 2 reprint articles which I hope you will find of interest!

Please remember that this is your Club and your newsletter, the greater the level of participation the better the club and the newsletter!

Enjoy!

Udo Rohmann

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Peel Regional Aquarium Club Executive

President	Vacant
Vice President	Tim Antler
Treasurer	Lloyd Cockburn
Secretary	Denise Antler
CAOAC Rep	John van Rompu
Auction Chair	Ed Czuchnicki
Program Chair	Gary Peacock
HiFin Editor	Udo Rohmann
Membership	Bob Wilson
Web Master	John van Rompu

CAOAC Calendar

May 1, 2010
Cambridge District Aquarium Society Auction

May 2, 2010
London Aquarium Society Auction

May 21-23, 2010
CAOAC Convention

June 26, 2010
Sarnia Aquarium Society
Guest speaker Gary Lange

September 26, 2010
Sarnia Aquarium Society Auction

September 26, 2010
London Aquarium Society Show and Auction

October 3, 2010
Hamilton Aquarium Society Auction

October 24, 2010
Kitchener Waterloo Aquarium Society Show and Auction

October 31, 2010
St. Catharine Aquarium Society Show and Auction

November 7, 2010
Peel Regional Aquarium Club Auction

Executive Meeting Minutes

No executive meeting was held

Cladophora aegagropila, The Lake Balls

by Martin Kelly

At our June club meeting, Malcolm Goss mentioned the green algae balls, (*Cladophora aegagropila*), that have recently appeared on the market and consequently the showbench. I decided to do some investigation into these strange plants and discovered quite a lot of information.

Cladophora balls were first discovered in Lake Zeller, Austria in 1824 by Dr Anton E Sauter, a physician and botanist. They were named *Cladophora aegagropila* and they belong to the *Cladophora sauteri* group. *Cladophora* means 'branched plant', *aegagropila* means 'lake ball' and *sauteri* is derived from Dr Sauter's name.

Lake balls were subsequently found to exist in the United Kingdom, Russia, Iceland, Sweden and other countries.

Lake balls have a green velvet-like appearance and have been known to grow to about 30cm in diameter. At one time it was thought that Cladophora was extremely slow growing, taking between 150 and 200 years to reach the size of a tennis ball. Recent studies however suggest that the slow growth rate in more recent time is due to poor water conditions, It has also been found that the growth rate can be improved by mixing sea water with the lake water. In common with most plants, *Cladophora aegagropila* obtains nourishment by absorbing sunlight using the process of photosynthesis.

The plants must remain in positions that receive plenty of sunlight otherwise they wilt start to die. Fortunately the plants are able to move around by using the undercurrents of the lake, which allows them to swap places with plants in the deeper areas of the lake. This process of rotation allows all the plants to photosynthesise and therefore ensures their survival. It has been reported that the plant has the ability to float or sink, in order to position itself depending on the brightness of the sunlight. *Cladophora aegagropila* tends to grow in large groups in the shallower parts of the lake.

They can grow so densely that other plant life can be totally obscured. Another benefit of being spherical is that when silt and other fine debris collects on the uppermost surface of the plant, gravity causes it to naturally rotate with the weight and the debris will fall off.

Today, *Cladophora* balls can be found in Lake Myvatn in northern Iceland, although there is far more information relating to the balls found in Lake Akan in Japan.

Northern Iceland

Lake Myvatn is a 37 sq. km lake in the volcanic region of Iceland. The most abundant fish in the lake is the Three Spined Stickleback, with other inhabitants including the Brown Trout and the Arctic Char. The whole area has been declared a wetland of international importance and is protected by law.

The lake is constantly monitored (since 1992) by use of aerial photography to follow changes in the distribution of the *Cladophora* mat on the bottom of the south basin.

Japan

Lake Akan is the most commonly known lake containing *Cladophora* balls, but they can also be found in Lakes Shiranitoro, Toro, Kawaguchi and Sai. All these lakes are in the Iloklaido district of Japan.

Local mythology surrounding these balls tells the story of a young man and young woman who are said to have drowned in the lake, their hearts turning into *Cladophora* balls.

The survival of the balls in Japan has been under threat on more than one occasion. The use of Lake Akan to transport timber caused many a plant to die. As the timber floated in the lake whilst waiting to be

transported, it blocked the vital sunlight that the plants require.

Between 1945 and 1954, water powered electrical generators caused a drop in the lake's water level, leaving many plants exposed to the open air, and nearly eradicating the population.

The *Cladophora* balls, or 'Marimo' as the Japanese call them, were declared a Japanese Natural Treasure in 1921, and then in 1952 they became a Special Japanese Natural Treasure.

This special status was a real problem for the plant as many people wished to own one and grand scale theft of the plant threatened its survival.

Cladophora balls are currently so popular in Japan that they are now protected plants. It is said that plants of other non-ball forming species are rolled by hand into balls and sold as true Marimo.

This raises the question, what really are these plants that are turning up in our shops and on our showbenches? If they truly, are *Cladophora aegagropila*, which are supposedly protected in Iceland and Japan, then where do they come from? If they're not they must be of the hand rolled variety, in which case the aquarist should be wary.

I'll leave you to make your own decisions.

The Peacock Goby (Tateurndina ocellicauda)

by Ian Pitts

The Peacock Goby is a small fish from Papua New Guinea. It has colours to rival some of the brightest killifish, purple, red, blue and yellow, and is easy to keep and breed. Sexing is easy in fish which are 1" or larger, the male having a distinctly rounded head, longer finnage, and an absence of black markings on his fins, whereas the female has a tapered head, a plumper stomach and usually, a black edge to her anal fin. As the female comes into breeding condition her bulging stomach area becomes brighter yellow, and is displayed to the male by bending her head and tail away from him, in a manner similar to that employed by female Kribensis.

These fish do not appear to be too fussy about water conditions, breeding in soft, slightly acid, to hard and alkaline water. They do however show a marked preference for live foods, ignoring flake or pellets. Some frozen foods are taken, notably, bloodworms.

For breeding, I place a pair in an 18"x10"x10" aquarium, pH 7.2, temperature 78ºF. The substrate consists of about 2" of fine gravel over an undergravel filter.

Cover is supplied by small flowerpots and pieces of slate, with a few clumps of Java Moss to complete the set-up.

The male is about 1.5", the female slightly smaller. To condition the fish they are fed live foods, mainly bloodworms. Within a couple of days of their introduction the male will establish which is his flowerpot, and rushes out to display to the female if she happens to get close.

When ready to spawn, the female responds to the males display with one of her own. The male now tries to entice her into his 'cave' by fluttering and spreading his fins in front of her, and then darting into the flowerpot. Eventually she follows him in. The following day the female is out and about again, noticeably thinner and duller. The male will not be lured out even when live food is offered. At this point I remove the female.

Eight to ten days later, the first free swimming fry are evident, but still no male! He will appear only after all the eggs have hatched, and pays little or no attention to the fifty or so fry which are now swimming about the tank, but will take any bloodworms that are offered. To prevent temptation I now take the male out. The fry grow quickly on a diet of brine shrimp nauplii, and newly hatched mosquito larvae, reaching about 0.5" after 4 to 5 weeks.

Do you have unwanted aquarium in habitants?

Please do not release them into the wild. Contact Peel Regional Aquarium Club or any other CAOAC Club to assist you in finding a new home for your pet(s)

Questions? Comments? Concerns?

About the Hi-Fin or Peel Regional Aquarium Club? Please contact any of the Club Executive Members as listed above and share your thoughts. This is a club run by volunteers for the benefit of all members. That includes you! Strong member participation is what has allowed this Club to continue for over 39 years!

Come and join us and make a difference!

About us

The Peel Regional Aquarium Club (PRAC) is a progressive, non-profit organization whose purpose is to share with our members the many wonders of the best hobby in the world, fish keeping and to promote our hobby in the community.

PRAC started out as the Brampton Aquarium Club in 1971. Since that time it has increased in numbers to what is a well run and successful club today. Membership is only $25 per year for adults and families, and $10 for students.

Our members come not only from the Region of Peel, but also as far away as Collingwood and Huntsville. Anyone can become a member who wishes to share the excitement of fish keeping.

In early 2008, we changed our name from Brampton Aquarium Club to Peel Regional Aquarium Club to better reflect who we are and the community in which we operate.

If you want to find out the latest information on fish keeping or have a problem that needs a solution, come to our meeting and ask the experts. Our friendly environment has attracted many new and experienced hobbyists. We hope that you will be the next member.

Our Motto

Giving back to the community is a PRAC priority. We have set up many aquariums at schools and hospitals. Building enthusiasm about the hobby in youngsters is important to us. As well, we have participated in Pet Shows, promoting fish keeping in the greater community.

Monthly Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month except during July and August

Our meetings are held at Turner Fenton Secondary School, 7935 Kennedy Road, South building, located at Kennedy Rd. and Steeles Ave. in Brampton.

The meetings start at 7 P.M

Our meetings consist of an interesting presentation, door prizes, guess the fish contest, monthly auction of live fish, plants and related equipment and of course time to talk to other hobbyists.

Club members have access to our extensive Club Library

Visitors are always welcome!

Please contact any executive member for further information

For Advertising in our Bulletin, please contact any Executive member