

KIRKCALDY AQUARIST SOCIETY INFORMATION SHEET

Date:- March "2004"

No,17

copyright of Kirkcaldy Aquarist Society



Name:- Phallichthys Fairweatheri.

Family:- Poeciliidae.

**Origin:- Guatemala, Mexico &
Honduras.**

Size:- Male 3cms & Female 4.5cms

The common name for this species is the Elegant Widow. The species was originally described by Rosen & Bailey in 1959, and named after Dr. gerald fairweather. It was first imported into the U.K by Ivan Dibble in 1979 via a German collection.

The body form of this species is typical of the genus, being laterally compressed and deep in the body. The Males gonopodium is spectacular often reaching beyond the caudal peduncle. Females exhibit a dark mottling around the genital opening. The body colour in both the sexes is vivid green with vertical black markings terminating in a vivid black strip through the eye. All the body scales exhibit an orange central spot. Pelvic, Dorsal and Anal fins have vivid green colour with a black crescent inside. All other fins are clear.

On our collection trip to Belize in February 2002, we collected specimens at several locations, namely, San estavan; rio Hondo; Grace Davis Bank; Chanchi and Salt Creek.

The most colourful specimens were from San Estevan and Chanchi.

I brought six fish from the Chanchi collection which upon sexing out produced one Female and five Males. From these fish I have built up a very impressive collection of the species.

Although it can be an ideal tank mate for similarly sized species, I have kept these fish in a species tank, which is well planted at one end with plenty of open swimming space. The only other inhabitants of the tank are Corydoras Habrosus.

Provided the water quality is reasonable this is not a difficult species, provided there are no sudden changes to the hardness or P.H. The temperature should be about 70 to 77f. Dietary requirements are flexible, from fresh, frozen to flake foods and anything which sinks to the base of the tank is normally consumed.

Once this species establishes a mixed age community there appears to be no predation on newly produced fry.

Fry are produced on a fairly regular four-week cycle and broods vary from about eight up to forty depending on the age of the adult female. The adults if well fed do not appear to hassle the young.

The young are about 5mm long at birth and grow steadily if somewhat slowly on a varied diet which should have a strong element of live food content such as Brine Shrimp.

Careful rearing will produce good quality fish which are fine show specimens, although patience is required as full growth may take up to ten to twelve months for show standard fish.

All in all this is a fine species which will reward the careful, patient aquarist with potential show winning specimens.

Text:- Ian Sinclair.

Photo:- Mike Dewar.