

THE FOUR-EYES

The brackish-water four-eyes Anableps anableps was the first live bearer to be described. The genus at this time contains three species A. anableps, A. doyii and A. microlepis. The cornea of the four-eyes is divided by a horizontal cross-partition which creates two transparent parts, one on top of the other. This gives the pupil a figure-eight shape. The fish can see what goes on above and below the surface of the water -- all at the

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sided females can only mate with right sided males and vice versa. Anableps sp. will only eat floating foods. -- KJ

AQUARIST'S ALMANAC

Run-in for a marine tank takes up to three weeks longer at 23.8° C (75°F) than at 25°C (77°F).

Tropical fish live longer but growth and reproduction are slowed when they are kept at lower temperatures. Growth and reproduction are accelerated at higher temperatures but life expectancy is shortened.

Reduce occurrence of split tails in guppies by gradually increasing pH to 7.2.

In the confines of an aquarium the natural balance between host and parasite is upset to where it may become lethal. Prevent this in marine fish by quarantine. Bathe new fish in a mixture of 1cc formalin to 3.7 l. (1 gal.) saltwater to eliminate monogenetic trematodes and protozoan parasites. Then keep with a solution of 22 ppm copper sulphate for three days to remove oodinium. After quarantine, prevent stress due to ammonia or salinity buildup.

Problems getting large New World cichlids to spawn? Raise pH 6 - 6.5 water to 32°C (90°F) and change 50% of tank water once a week. Feed high protein food such as mealworms.



Anableps anableps

same time. The divided eye gives an impression that the fish has four eyes. When swimming right below the surface the top halves of the divided eyes are above water. Anableps will submerge at rapid intervals but only for split seconds --- perhaps to keep its eyes wet.

Keep these large (25 - 29cm) fish in shallow covered tanks at 24°-28° C with brackish water and an area for the fish to lie partially out of water, like a mudskipper.

To breed, raise water temperature to 26° - 30°C; increase salinity to 1.023 - 1.027 (seawater). Anableps are one-sided livebearers. Left-

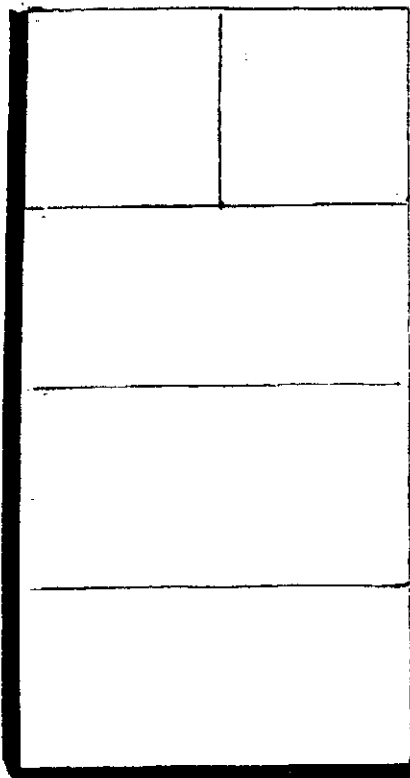


Fig. 1.

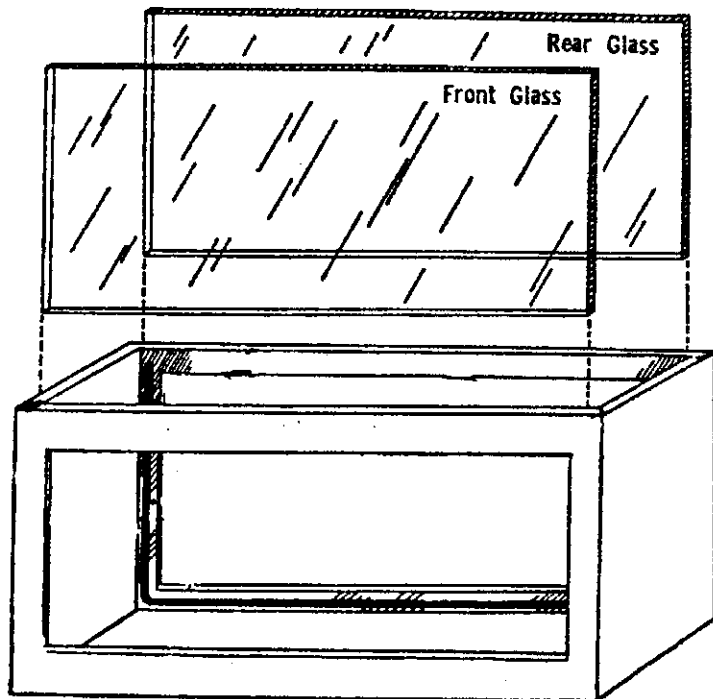


Fig. 2. Rear glass is optional.

BUILD THIS INEXPENSIVE BIG TANK

This 119-gal. (approx.) tank is made from one sheet of 4x8 1/2-in. marine plywood. First, at 24-in. intervals, make the four cuts shown in figure 1. With a jigsaw or keyhole saw, cut an opening for the front glass, leaving a 1-in. frame. If you want rear glass, cut a similar opening in the back panel. Sand the cuts smooth and assemble using 1-in. monel boat screws, one every four inches. You'll find a power screwdriver most helpful. Next, with a caulking gun and a tube of clear silicone adhesive, seal all inside seams. Be sure the tube of adhesive says "for aquarium use" otherwise it may be toxic to fish.

Once assembled and caulked the tank may be painted inside and out using a good non-toxic epoxy paint or taken to a fiberglass boat fabricator and sprayed with Gel-coat in your choice of color. Since ours will be a marine tank we had it sprayed: inside a deep aqua, outside white. After painting or spraying, measure carefully the inside front dimensions and have a 3/8 in.-thick glass piece cut 1/8-in. smaller than the height and width of the tank. If you're going to have rear glass you must repeat the measurement since the sawcuts will rarely be identical front and back.

Now lay the tank face down. Run a bead of silicone adhesive around the frame and lay the glass in place. Weight the glass where it contacts the adhesive until dry. Let the tank stay in this position for 24 hours, then repeat for the rear glass if any. Fill and water test for 24 hours

LAKE MALAWI'S MONSTER MELANOCHROMIS

Melanochromis robustus sp.n.

by Don S. Johnson

While researching material collected by Peter Davies, Stuart Grant and others for the first edition of Mbuna The colorful rock-dwelling cichlid fishes of lake Malawi, I came upon a number which had never before been scientifically described. Many of these have since been published, but several have not. One of these is herewith described for the first time.

Melanochromis robustus sp.n. Holotype AMNH35386, male 140mm standard length collected by Peter Davies off Chizimulu Island, Lake Malawi, Malawi. Deposited in the American Museum of Natural History, New York. The living holotype is pictured as "Melanochromis sp. n. 1" on page 24 of Mbuna The colorful rock-dwelling cichlid fishes of Lake Malawi.

Diagnosis: *Melanochromis robustus* is the largest species in the genus known to date. It has been imported and sold in the aquarium trade as *M. perspicax* but there are several important and obvious differences. According to Trewavas, *M. perspicax* has an eye diameter of 3.34 in length of head whereas *M. robustus*' eye is much larger. *M. perspicax* is described as having 12 gill rakers on the outer arch vs. *M. robustus*' 15. In *Melanochromis robustus* the maxillary does not reach vertical from the anterior edge of the eye whereas in *M. perspicax* it does. The two species also differ greatly in color and pattern. *M. robustus* is indigo blue (male) with blue-black horizontal stripes and blue-black interradiial markings. *M. perspicax* shows vertical barring and is probably a *Pseudotropheus* sp. *Melanochromis robustus* differs from all other known *Melanochromis* species in body depth. The holotype was a wild male photographed and preserved within two weeks of capture. A female was also collected but was rendered unsuitable for photography or diagnosis. Female color is slate gray with two dark horizontal stripes.

Description: Type mature male 140mm standard length. Greatest body depth 3.0, least depth of caudal peduncle 8.2, head length 3.5, all in standard length. Orbit diameter 3.95, snout length 1.97, upper jaw length 2.8, lower jaw length 2.8, all in head length. Dorsal XVII, 10. Anal: III, 7. Teeth: At least three rows in each jaw. Anterior teeth conical, unicuspid. Teeth in this specimen very sparse and worn. Scales in lateral series: 34. Gill rakers on entire outer arch: 15. Lips fleshy, slightly thickened. Maxillary does not reach vertical from anterior edge of eye. Color in alcohol: uniform blue/black, ventral and pectoral fins clear with dark interradiial markings. Caudal fin edge clear. Color in life: indigo blue with one broad light blue stripe extending horizontally from behind the gills to the caudal peduncle bordered by two dark blue/black stripes. Dark blue/black interradiial markings.

Etymology: from the Latin, referring to the fish's size.

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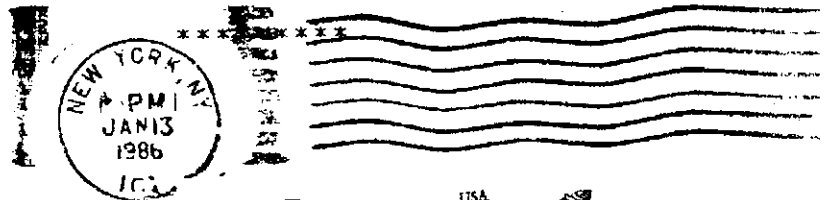
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MBUNA Book update eight pages, black and white, covering all of the recently described species, is available from Pisces Publishing for \$2.50 including US postage.



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