

Natural World Newsletter—Cichlids

Practical Fishkeeping Magazine readers vote Natural World number 1 cichlid specialist

" We are not getting any fish from here, we will get them from a proper fish shop".

When we first opened in April 2004 we were not sure how Lake Malawi Cichlids would take off in Leicester particularly in a shop which was predominately a pet shop. I will never forget hearing a lady say to her son " We are not getting any fish from here, we will get them from a proper fish shop". Made my blood boil. At the time our 140 tanks comprised of 30 tanks of American and African riverine cichlids, 30 Tanks of Tanganyikan and Malawi tank bred Cichlids, 20 tanks of Oddballs and catfish, the rest of the tanks were for community type fish. We had some fantastic fish from all corners of the world and always had a good stock of L number catfish often 30—40 different species. We started to attract customers from much further afield. The American cichlids started to sell but were very slow movers, I had some very rare fish but they failed to take off, mainly because of the limited amount of American cichlids you could keep in a tank, also as they are brilliant parents, you can end up with 400 + Jaguar cichlids and the problem of what can we do with them.

I cut the amount of Americans down and sought out some suppliers of wild caught Malawi's — my favorite fish — This was a gamble as they are far more expensive and I had to try and convince Scott (my Director) that it could work. Slowly we started to get the local customers interested in these amazing coloured fish and there behavior. It wasn't long before we had to expand the amount of tanks dedicated to them, we started to do mail order fish via eBay and before long we were getting customers from as far a field as Newcastle, Ipswich, Cardiff and Cornwall. With the help of the fish forums Cichlid City first followed by lakemalawi.co.uk we soon became

Cynotilapia afra "Lundu"
One of the rarer species we have



well known amongst the Malawi community, but best of all the shop has become a great meeting point for Malawi enthusiast, when we have a new shipment we can see 20—30 customers that have travelled many miles to come and chat, meet, buy and to taste Anna's now famous tea. We are now working hard in trying to keep the title.

Welcome to our first newsletter we are still in the development stages so the format is likely to change. We intend to produce an informative profile on at least one species of fish each issue. We would like to encourage readers questions and suggestions

If you would like to receive further copies of our newsletter please email

colwise@btinternet.com

Fish Profile

Metriclima sp. "aurora blue" Cobwe



Male Cobwe pronounced cobue not showing his full colours

The Mozambique coast on the east side of the lake is the home to most of the 'Auroa' type species, although there are locations around the lake where these fish have been introduced. They are found in the shallower areas between 2 meters and 10 meters over rocks and the sandy substrate.



They are not compatible with other aurora types such as *Metriclima hajomaylandi*, *Metriclima chrysothallos* or *Metriclima barlowi*.

Female *Metriclima* sp. "aurora blue" Cobwe



Male *Metriclima* sp. "aurora blue" Cobwe—Picture by Clare Riley

The male dorsal fin is blue and does show dorsal spots and occasionally has a yellow fringe. The caudal fin is also fringed by yellow. The yellow on the male covers the whole head area and stretches along the back creating a band under the dorsal fin, this gives it the American common name *Pseudotropheus* sp. Flameback and in the UK they are also known as *Metriclima* sp. "hajomaylandi" Cobwe, this name derives from the full yellow face and head. As hajomaylandi are found in much deeper waters I prefer to use the "aurora sp." banner. The female is distinguished by the yellow paired fins and a blue and yellow fringe on the dorsal and yellow fringe on the caudal. The female fins are slightly more rounded and chunky. Egg spots are not a reliable method of sexing as the female usually carries them (see picture). They are quite easy to vent.



Venting

It is important that fish are handled carefully when venting them out. Make sure your hands are wet and you use a big net to hold the fish in, also make sure that they are held over a bowl of tank water in case they jump free. On adult fish you can usually see the females vent however it is not so easy with smaller fish. Using a magnifying glass is a method that picks out subtle differences however if you use a camera on the macro setting and then zoom in, the difference is easy to spot. This is usually a 2 man job unless you use a tripod. Before you try to take a picture, practise first with a small object so that you can get the focus and position right before you have a slippery fish in your hand. It is important that the fish is out of water for a minimum time. It is best then to add a dose of stress coat, aquasafe or something similar to your tank to help replenish the growth of the fishes beneficial mucus.

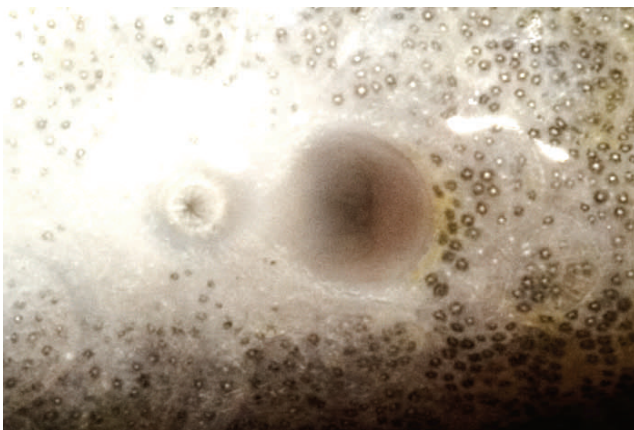
Aurora are quite an easy fish to vent when they are above 2", the females vent is easy to see whereas the males is difficult



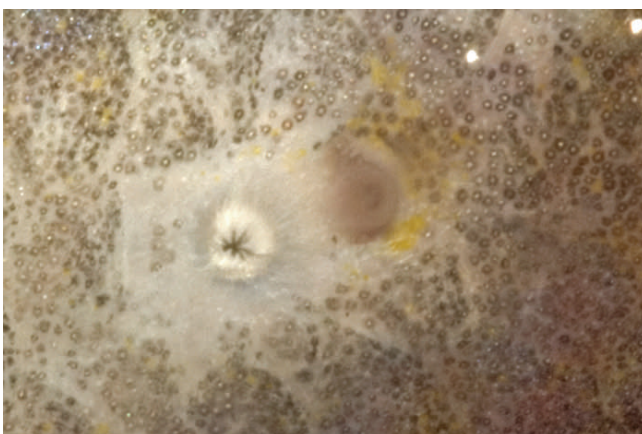
Female vent zoomed in. Note one large vent and one small vent.



Female vent as you would see it — You can only see the large vent. You would struggle to see a male vent



Male vent zoomed in. Both vents are of equal size, also there is a bigger gap between the vents



The female is the top picture and the male is the bottom one.

The vent is nearest to the caudal fin and the anus is nearer to the head. It is the vent that is different

How TO

When receiving your fish via mail order, open the box in a darkened room and tip the bags into a bucket. Get a 3' length of 6mm airline and start to siphon water out of your tank into the bucket, tie a knot in the airline so that the water flow is restricted to a drip. Half fill the bucket via the drip (approx 1 hour) then catch the fish up and release into your tank (lights off).

We saw a new import on the latest delivery— *Pseudotropheus sp. "socolofi nkolongwe" yellow chin*

G R E A T F 1 O F F E R

We can now offer a great service to our customers in the form of some great F1 fish. F1 are fish that are spawned from a wild father and wild mother, which guarantee great colour and shape. These fish would usually sell for just a little less than wild caught. However we will provide 4 trios' of different fish* for £60.00 (12 fish) that's £5.00 per fish. For £75.00 we will deliver them as well. A great starter package

* available when stock allows



CONGRATULATIONS

CONGRATULATIONS THIS MONTH TO

Greg and Nadine who tied the knot in Rugby then shot off to Mexico for a spot of ' fish spotting !!!! '. Nadine is well known among the members of lakemalawi.co.uk forum as there fish health expert , she has helped countless people with her knowledgeable advice, Greg is also a fish maniac spending his time flying off to Japan to increase his stock of excellent Koi. One day he may see the light and use his heated pond for some decent fish. Congratulations to you both we wish you a long and happy life together.



**Voted Cichlid Specialist Retailer
of the Year by PFK magazine**

Natural World Fish List Mail Order Next Day Delivery

overnight courier 5kg and below £9.50 (approx 6 bags) 10kg £18.00 all fish guaranteed live delivery

colwise@btinternet.com

Telephone 0116 2602001

June Price List

Aulonocara rostratum	<i>wild</i>	each	£25.00
Aulonocara kandensis	<i>wild</i>	Kande pair	£47.50
Aulonocara saulosi	<i>wild</i>	Likoma each	£28.50
Aulonocara Sp.	<i>GB</i>	Blue Neon each	£24.95
Aulonocara stuartgranti	<i>wild</i>	Usisya pair	£43.75
Cynotilapia afra	<i>wild</i>	Lions Cove each	£14.75
Cynotilapia afra	<i>wild</i>	Red Top Likoma each	£11.75
Cynotilapia afra	<i>wild</i>	Mbamba Mphanga pair	£25.00
Cynotilapia afra	<i>wild</i>	Mbenji each	£8.25
Cynotilapia afra	<i>wild</i>	Lundu each	£16.25
Cynotilapia afra	<i>wild</i>	Mbwecca cobue each	£17.50
Cynotilapia afra	<i>wild</i>	Yellow Head Mphanga each	£15.00
Cynotilapia afra	<i>wild</i>	Chilumba each	£14.65
Cynotilapia afra	<i>wild</i>	Mara Rocks Yellow Dorsal each	£20.25
Lab. Trewavassae	<i>wild</i>	Lions Cove each 1 male	£19.95
M. aurora	<i>GB</i>	Mara Rocks each	£6.75
M. aurora	<i>wild</i>	Blue Cobue each	£15.00
M. aurora	<i>wild</i>	Likoma each	£15.00
M. zebra	<i>wild</i>	Black Dorsal Thundu each	£15.00
M. callainos	<i>wild</i>	Each	£13.25
M. zebra	<i>wild</i>	Blue Chidunga Rocks each	£15.00
Proto. Taenilatus	<i>TB</i>	Boadzulu Red each	£22.50
Pseudotropheus daemasoni	<i>TB</i>	each	£9.75
Pseudotropheus daktari	<i>wild</i>	each	£15.75
Pseudotropheus sp. Zebra blue	<i>wild</i>	Galeriya Reef each	£14.75

Proto. Taenilatus	<i>wild</i>	Yellow Chin Pombo each	£28.75
Cyrt. Moori	<i>TB</i>	each	£22.50
Yellow Labs	<i>TB</i>	each	£7.50
Pseudotropheus acei	<i>TB</i>	each	£6.15
Cop. Trewavassae	<i>wild</i>	Ivory Mloto pair	£60.00
Mel. interuptus	<i>wild</i>	Chizumulu each	£16.50
Pseudotropheus aggressive bars	<i>wild</i>	Yellow Fin each	£15.25
Ctenopharynx pictus	<i>wild</i>	Mara each	£30.00
Tropheops Red Cheek	<i>wild</i>	Chizumulu each	£16.50
Cop. azureus	<i>wild</i>	Mbenji Island each	£35.00
Copadichromis Chizumulu Blue	<i>wild</i>		£30.00
Cynotilapia Axelrodi	<i>wild</i>	Ruarwe	£16.50
Cynotilapia Sp Maleri	<i>wild</i>	White Blaze	£30.00
Labeotropheus Fuelleborni	<i>wild</i>	Red Top - Chindunga Rocks	£21.75
Labeotropheus Fuelleborni	<i>wild</i>	Red Top OB - Chindunga Rocks	£22.50
Labeotropheus Trewavasae	<i>wild</i>	Likoma	£20.25
Labidochromis Chizumulae	<i>wild</i>	Chizumulu	£30.75
Labidochromis Strigatus	<i>wild</i>	Chizumulu	£18.00
Maylandia Zebra	<i>wild</i>	Blue - Galireya Reef	£17.25
Maylandia Zebra	<i>wild</i>	Katale - Chilumba	£17.25
Maylandia Zebra	<i>wild</i>	Red Top - Nakantenga Island	£21.00
Melanochromis Cyaneorhabdos	<i>wild</i>	Maingano	£30.00
Pseudotropheus - Chailosi Bee	<i>wild</i>	Chilumba	£16.00
Pseudotropheus Elongatus	<i>wild</i>	Chewere	£22.50
Pseudotropheus Elongatus	<i>wild</i>	Mara - Mozambique	£22.50
Pseudotropheus Mbembe Deep	<i>wild</i>	Mbembe Point	£56.25
Pseudotropheus Mbembe Deep	<i>wild</i>	Mbembe Point Pair	£105.00
Pseudotropheus Pulpican	<i>wild</i>	Likoma	£17.25
Pseudotropheus Socolofi	<i>wild</i>	Yellow Chin - Nkolongwe - Mozambique	£22.50
Synodontis Njassae	<i>wild</i>	Lake Malawi Catfish	£19.50
Tropheops Yellow Breast	<i>wild</i>	Mbembe - Likoma	£18.75

F1 fish great quality from wild caught males and wild caught females

Size from 3cm—£7.50 each 4 trios' (12 fish) for £60.00 (£75.00 delivered to your door)

Metriclima estherae minos reef

Metriclima aurora likoma

Pseudotropheus tropheops red cheek

Metriclima callainos

Pseudotropheus elongates bee

Fossochromis rostratus

Please ask what is available as the F1 list changes daily

Available soon F1 Melanochromis sp. Northern Blue £12.00 (not to be included in F1 special deal)

F1 Metriclima Mbembe Deep POA (not to be included in F1 special deal)

Special offer 3" English bred nice colour blue dolphins £15.00 each 2 for £25.00

