

## ALA Species Maintenance Program (SMP) Spring 2009 Offering

### *Skiffia francesae*



### Background

We are fortunate to have an expert on this fish in our club – Jim Langhammer. In this sell sheet I will summarize some of the necessary information for our offering from an article he wrote. ( I encourage club members to read the complete article which will be published shortly.) I have also drawn from other published sources.

*Skiffia francesae*, also known as the Golden Sawfin Goodeid, is believed to have been extinct in the wild since 1979. Any stock in the hobby today comes from a collection made in the Rio Teuchitlan, Jalisco, Mexico, by Dr. Robert R. Miller of the University of Michigan in 1976. Dr. Miller's stock of this fish (and other goodeids) was transferred to Jim in 1979 when Miller was forced to close the university's laboratory aquariums. Jim was a logical recipient in his dual capacity as a hobbyist and Curator of Fishes at Detroit's Belle Isle Aquarium.

### Characteristics

Most members of the *Skiffia* genus have compressed bodies, small heads and irregularly shaped dorsal fins that give rise to the Sawfin name. *Skiffia francesae* males have a characteristic golden color throughout much of the body. Females are drabber in color. Males grow to around 1.8" and females. 2".

### Care and Feeding

When it comes to husbandry, *Skiffia francesae* is typical of members of the *Skiffia* genus, all of which can be difficult in captivity. A 20-gallon long aquarium is an ideal minimum size for keeping the fish. When introducing *Skiffia francesae* to the aquarium, make the transition as slow as possible. After the settling in, be

very conservative with diet. Well-formulated commercial flake food alone may be the best choice. Goodeids typically do best at temperatures between 70-75 degrees Fahrenheit. Large and frequent water changes are recommended. Lighting at 16 hours a day seems to contribute to success with this fish.

## **Breeding**

*Skiffia francesae* breeds best when kept in a large colony – say, 20 fish of near-equal sex ratio – but success can be had with as little as one pair. In a larger colony, if fewer females are available, the aquarium should be heavily planted. Dither fish like guppies or platies may reduce bullying by dominant individual fish. Since females mature earlier than males, try to match less-aggressive juvenile males with adult females as the colony comes into social equilibrium. After a pregnancy of approximately eight weeks, as many as 20-30 fry may be delivered. Well-fed goodeids almost never cannibalize their young which tend to be relatively large at birth.

## **How to Purchase**

This extremely rare fish will first be offered at the Indianapolis ALA convention in April. Following the convention, if any fish remain, they will be available for shipment to non-attendees. The price per pair for non-attendees will be determined following a review of the auction results.

If you are interested in purchasing this fish (subject to price) and are not attending the convention, email me at

tcrane2@att.net

and I will add your name to a list.

## **For the Record**

Once you have the fish established and breeding, please send me a follow-up email to that effect. The measure of success of SMP will be our ability to show that we have significantly increased the number of hobbyists who are breeding extinct and endangered fish.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Tom Crane