

## **Bunches and Bunches of Baby Bushies:**

Breeding Brown Bushynose Plecos (*Ancistrus temminckii*)

by Cam Turner, Special BAP Report.

*As I'm sure those that have been in the hobby far longer than I have will agree, breeding brown bristlenose/bushynosed plecos has gotten far easier over the years. When the Kwas BAP program was started, these fish were categorized as a class D, 20 points. Maybe I just got lucky, but if my research for this article is any indication, maybe breeding this fun little fish should be re-classified down a level. That however, is a topic for a whole other article.*

Over a year ago I purchased my first three brown bushynose plecos from another club member. At the time they were unsexed and only about an inch long. Within 10 months they had all grown and matured into a young females, the largest of which my two year old son named "monkey".

When a forum post in the for sale section said that a local hobby breeder was "diversifying" his breeding stock, and that he had two adult males I was the third to respond. Fortunately he agreed to sell me one of his other males. I brought him home and placed him in my 10G quarantine tank for a week (see Small Tails, March 2007 "Plastic Pleco Palace" for a funny side story). He immediately took up residence in a medium sea shell that I thought was just for decoration. Silly me.

When more than a week had passed and he was still inside I decided to put Monkey into the quarantine tank with him to see what would happen. 10-12 days later I had some free swimming fry. A week later Zenin counted 20+ for my first ever BAP count (I counted over 50 :). At the start I fed them parboiled lettuce (lettuce dunked in rapidly boiling water for 2 minutes) which started to look like swiss cheese within hours. Later I fed the whole family parboiled zucchini and algae wafers as their primary diet. There was of course also some driftwood in the tank to rasp on.

Over the next 60 days I got much more interested in breeding fish and purchased a used 35 gallon shallow breeding tank (36x18). I moved the happy couple and their young over to this bare-bottomed tank, as well as their driftwood and seashell. After my final BAP count I purchased a few more females, a junior male and a breeding tube to complete my "group" as per the many articles I read online.

Getting these guys to breed didn't require any special water parameters or conditioning except for my usual routine of 10-20% weekly water changes. However, my reading indicates that the water changes probably brought cooler, more oxygenated water and diluted the nitrates simulating the start of monsoon season in the Amazon.

If you have a male and unrelated female about a year or two old, put them together in a small tank with some wood and a cave. You probably won't have nay trouble getting babies if you keep the nitrates down.

However, after 4 or 5 months I found that few people wanted to pay more than pennies for these little beauties, and that the market was saturated both in direct-to-hobbyist and sell-for-credit to the LFS. Since I had met all of the requirements for BAP credit, I sold my adult colony to another club member. I haven't heard if they are breeding for her yet. The dozens of offspring I had left over were placed into my new 135G high-tech planted tank where they keep my plants and glass free from algae.

The 35G tank is now a plant grow-out tank for my HAP efforts, but since there are also some Celestial Pearl Danios (aka Galaxy Rasboras) in there, who knows? Maybe it's still a breeding tank too.