



Pacific Coast Cichlid Association

Membership Handbook

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## NOTES:

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## WELCOME

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The Pacific Coast Cichlid Association (PCCA) and its board of directors extend a warm welcome to you, and hope that your membership in this exciting association of cichlid enthusiasts is informative, rewarding, and of general benefit to you and your fish. The PCCA has many programs and benefits for both local and remote members. The purpose of this handbook is to outline the programs, policies, and procedures afforded to members.

However, the most important benefit of the PCCA cannot be outlined in a handbook or be placed into a program, and cannot be governed by rules. This is the benefit of personal and social contact with people with who have like interests and experience in the keeping of these marvelous animals called cichlids!

## AFFILIATIONS

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### Federation of American Aquarium Societies (FAAS)

The Pacific Coast Cichlid Association is one of over a hundred independent aquarium clubs serviced by the Federation of American Aquarium Societies. This organization is comprised of individual aquarium societies in the United States, Canada, and South America, and is in the process of expanding throughout the world. Its main purposes are to further growth and activities of aquarium societies; serve as a communication mechanism among aquarium societies; promote the maintenance, propagation and growth of tropical fishes and other aquatic life forms; and represent aquarium societies before governmental bodies. Member societies receive the bi-monthly publication, FAAS Report, which contains articles and methods to help individual societies. FAAS shares its experiences in club management, administration, projects, shows, and breeder award programs, etc.

The highlight of the FAAS year is the annual convention. A fish show containing 75 classes several of which are cichlids, is planned. There will also be five photo classes. Awards for all fish & photo classes will be given in addition to 11 major awards.

The FAAS administers breeder award programs for both fish and plants. Separate programs exist for individuals of member clubs which compete against members of other clubs; and for club totals which compete against other clubs for total points. Awards for winners in several categories are given each year in addition to FAAS "Breeder of the Year" and "New Species Spawned" awards. The organization also administers a publications award program containing over 17 categories for associated societies. Members of the PCCA wishing to participate in any of these programs should contact the FAAS representative listed on page two of the current *Cichlid Blues*.

## ORGANIZATION

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ure of the Secretary promptly to give such notice for any reason, then such notice may be given by any person so designated to do so by the President or the Board of Directors.

Maintain a current membership list at all times as evidenced by the records of the membership chairperson.

Perform such other duties as may be required by either the President or the Board of Directors from time to time.

### **Treasurer:**

Collect and receive all funds and membership dues due to the Association and disburse such funds in accordance with instructions of the Board of Directors. All receipts shall be forthwith deposited in a bank or money market fund approved by the Board of Directors, and all disbursements there from shall be made by check, drawn on such account by such persons as may be authorized by the Board of Directors. Each check must be signed by two directors.

Make financial report to the Board of Directors whenever directed, covering such matters as may be requested monthly.

Keep custody of all stocks, bonds, notes, or other securities which are in the property of the Association. Such securities shall be kept in a safe place selected with the approval of the Board of Directors.

## PURPOSE

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**F**ounded in August of 1980, the Pacific Coast Cichlid Association exists to meet the needs of the west coast cichlid hobbyist and, as stated in *Cichlidae Communiqué* No. 1, “to create an environment which fosters education and the exchange of ideas in a social atmosphere”. By-Laws were constructed in 1983-1984 and the PCCA was incorporated as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of California on January 30, 1985 with the following official purpose:

- 1 To foster an interest in Aquariums.
- 2 To promote the study of Aquatic plants and Animals (especially fishes of the Family Cichlidae).
- 3 To disseminate information and learning concerning the same.

Since inception, the PCCA has grown rapidly from a local society of 20 members to one of national scope, with members all over the world.

In April of 2001, the PCCA was granted Federal Tax Exempt Status by the Department of the Treasury under the Internal Revenue Code, section 501 (c). What this means is that in addition to not having to pay income tax, donors may deduct contributions to the PCCA as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to the PCCA are deductible for Federal tax purposes. Please see your tax accountant for further explanations.

## OVERVIEW

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**R**aising, maintaining and breeding Cichlids is no easy task. It requires dedication and continual self-education to maintain them successfully.

The Pacific Coast Cichlid Association exists to further that end by acting as a conduit through which a wealth of information and fish stock from many sources can be shared.

Through internationally known speakers, award winning publications, club sponsored special events, and general membership meetings programmed to encourage member interaction, the PCCA forms a vital link in the distribution chain of information about aquarium science in general and cichlids in particular.

Informative programs range from travelogues and slide shows of actual fish-collecting trips to talks about tank maintenance and feeding techniques.

Amateur and scientific articles of any aspect of the Cichlid hobby can be found in the *Cichlidae Communiqué*, the PCCA semi-monthly journal, while club news and program information can be found in the *Cichlid Blues*, another semi-monthly publication sent to PCCA members.

Trips, Contests, Award Programs, Tours and Educational Seminars are only a sampling of the special events calendar for the PCCA, making it possible for members to see and participate in areas of fishkeeping not normally available to hobbyists.

Programs, Guest Speakers, Conferences, Publications, BAP and a host of other club benefits make membership in the Pacific Coast Cichlid Association a must for anyone keeping Cichlids, beginner and veteran alike.

## ORGANIZATION

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### **Vice President:**

In the absence of the President, or in the event of the refusal or inability of the President to act, exercise and have the same power and duties with relation to the Association as does the President.

### **Secretary:**

Keep a true and accurate record of all proceedings of the association, including minutes of all General Membership meetings and meetings, regular or special, of the Board of Directors.

Keep and maintain a separate book in which shall be recorded all Directives and Declarations of Policy specially adopted by the Board of Directors at any meeting. A true copy of each of such Directives and Declarations of Policy shall be recorded and filed immediately. This book of Directives and Declarations of Policy shall be available for inspection by a member of the Board of Directors at any time, upon request.

Countersign all documents on behalf of the Association whenever necessary or required, and retain true copies at all times when the original is in other hands.

Give and serve all notices required by law or pursuant to these By-Laws. In the event of the fail-

## **ORGANIZATION**

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In accordance with PCCA Bylaws, the club is guided by a Board of Directors consisting of seven (7) elected members of the club. Elections are held twice a year, with three directors up for election in June and the remaining four positions filled in December. Each elected Director will serve a one year term, starting with the first Board meeting after their election. Any single, family, or lifetime member in good standing is eligible to run for a position on the Board of Directors, per the Bylaws of the PCCA.

Generally, after each December election, the full board will elect, from among themselves, officers to fill the positions with the following titles and responsibilities:

### **President:**

Preside at all membership meetings and meetings of the Board of Directors.

Shall appoint and remove members of all committees subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

By and with the consent of the Board of Directors, make all appointments to, and removal from, the Editorial and Business staffs of the Association's publications, and also, with the consent of the Board of Directors, employ, appoint, and dismiss such other persons as may be deemed necessary to be employed to carry on the activities of the Association.

Represent the Association in all matters in the interim between all meetings of the Board of Directors.

The president may hold office for a maximum of two consecutive years, if so elected.

## **ACTIVITIES**

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**M**onthly meetings are held on the second Saturday of every month and are open to members and non-members alike.

Answers about any phase of fish keeping most likely can be found by asking one of our veteran hobbyists during a break in one of our meetings or through our informal question and answer session at the beginning of each meeting.

Programs are typically given by guest speakers from other organizations or related fields of interest, and generally include a slide show or other visual aids.

Special programs at holiday meetings have become a favorite social event for many members, with special prizes and awards going to winning participants in contests and games.

Raffles are held each month. Currently, two large aquariums are raffled each month, with other prizes donated by club sponsors or purchased by the PCCA. Many members have increased their fishkeeping capacity by participating in the raffles.

Topping off each meeting is the monthly auction. Club members bring in their rare and exotic fish from all over to benefit both the club and themselves. Each auction item can be split with the club at a given percentage, or all proceeds may be donated to the PCCA to help continue its programs and publications. Such donations help keep membership dues low.

## ACTIVITIES

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### PCCA Auction Guidelines

(As approved by the Board of Directors, March 2001)

1. All items for the auction must be registered before the start of the main program (approximately 7:00 pm). No items may be removed from the auction after being registered for the auction.
2. Juvenile auction fish should be of sufficient size to insure positive identification. Three quarter inch ( $\frac{3}{4}$ " ) is recommended.
3. Fish must be bagged properly or in buckets. No sandwich bags or similar items will be permitted. There will be a \$1.00 rebagging charge on leaking or deflated bags.
4. All bags and containers must be properly identified with auction labels provided by the auction committee and filled out by the seller. Each bag must also be marked with an indelible marker as to species, number of fish and seller name.
5. Each seller is limited to a maximum of eight (8) bags per species, unless approved by the Auction Chairperson.
6. No more than twelve (12) fish per bag or container are allowed, unless approved by the Auction Chairperson.
7. Each seller is limited to a maximum of 32 items, unless approved by the Auction Chairperson.
8. Each seller will be entitled to a split of the selling price for each item registered as follows:  
  
Items sold for \$2.00 or less will go as a 100% donation to the club.  
  
All other items – the first \$2.00 goes to the club with the remaining amount split 85% to the seller and 15% to the club.

## ORGANIZATION

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Although the club had its beginnings as an informal association of avid hobbyists in the early 1980's, by 1982 it had grown to such a size, that it was decided that the members would form a non-profit corporation to focus the efforts and direction of the group in furthering the cichlid keeping hobby.

As a direct result of incorporation in 1985, a formal organization was defined and is set forth in the following section, so that members can be aware of the responsibilities of its board of directors and the chairmen of the various committees which serve the club.

Memberships in the PCCA officially consist of the following types:

- Single: Single memberships shall be limited to individual members over twelve years of age and shall have one vote in the election of Directors.
- Family: Family memberships shall be limited to families with two or more persons, one of which is over 17 years of age and shall have two votes in the election of Directors.
- Foreign: Foreign memberships shall be limited to persons outside the North American Continent and shall have one vote in the election of Directors.
- Lifetime: Lifetime memberships are awarded by the Directors for outstanding contributions to the club. Each Lifetime member shall have one vote in the election of Directors.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES

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Another program that the PCCA sponsors, as funding permits, is the Pacific Coast Cichlid Association Ichthyology Scholarship.

The award is given to a candidate which, in the view of the scholarship committee, has demonstrated outstanding achievement in the Ichthyological or other closely related field. The PCCA is naturally inclined to recognize individuals whose work impinges upon the aquarium hobby to some extent. Award recipients in the past include:

- 1994 - Jap Jan deGreef, Central American Trip: \$200
- 1993 - Paul Loiselle, Madagascar research: \$500
- 1990 - PCCC - Steinhart Aquarium: joint with SFAS \$1500
- 1988 - PCCC - Steinhart Aquarium: joint with SFAS \$1200
- 1985 - Craig Ragland, University of Washington: \$500.
- 1984 - Institute for Biological Exploration: \$500.
- 1983 - William Eaton, U.C. Davis: \$500.
- 1982 - Steinhart Aquarium, San Francisco \$200.

## ACTIVITIES

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### PCCA Auction Guidelines (continued)

100% of the selling price will go to the PCCA on all donated items. Sellers are encouraged to donate at least one bag to the club. Such donations help keep membership dues low.

100% of the selling price will go to the PCCA on all BAP, Conservation and Grant items. This helps to defer the cost of BAP Awards, and raises money for the Conservation and Grants committees.

9. Charge account tabs for the auction may be run only by PCCA members in good standing. All charge account tabs must be settled at the end of the auction. Bidder cards for charge account tabs can be obtained from auction personnel prior to the start of the auction.

**No responsibility of loss, theft, or damage to any items will be accepted by the Pacific Coast Cichlid Association, or representatives.**

All questions should be directed to the Auction Chairperson.

Proceeds from all club activities go into the club's general fund where it is used to pay for the club's member services and administration. Some of the major expenses include guest speaker expenses (such as airfares and lodgings), library upkeep and updating, advertising, and supporting our fine publications (*Cichlidae Communiqué* & *Cichlid Blues*).

## ACTIVITIES

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Contests and special events are held throughout the year and are governed by the coordinated efforts of the Contest Committee and Special Events Committee. Although new contests and events are conceived each year, several are held on a periodic basis, as follows:

### CONTESTS

Photo & Art Contest

Writing Contest

Fish Raising Contest

### SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Fish "Family" Feud

"Fuzzy Fish" ID Contest

Cichlid Quiz

"Lets Make a Fish Deal"

Liars Club

Iron Aquarist

### EVENTS

PCCC

Cichlid Workshops

BBQ Social

ACA Convention

## COMMUNITY SERVICES

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In October 1988, and again in October of 1990, the PCCA co-sponsored the Pacific Coast Cichlid Conference, as a benefit for the Steinhart Aquarium at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco, CA, which cumulatively raised thousands of dollars for Steinhart's use in research projects and maintaining their fine facilities.

Attendees participated in an all day event featuring international known lecturers, speaking on a variety of topics relating to the hobby and science of cichlids.

Capping the day was a giant auction in which participants bid for hundreds of lots of cichlids, including many of the rarer and more unusual fish that are not commonly seen in the hobby.

Special events, such as the Conference, further the PCCA's aims of supporting both research and preservation of cichlid species in both captivity and their natural habitat.

Additionally, the PCCA serves to educate the community through appearances on Public Broadcasting stations and programs for Pet Fairs commonly held throughout the year at fairgrounds and halls throughout the area.

The club is always looking for new ways to support and promote the hobby and club members are encouraged to express any ideas that they may have to further these goals.

## PUBLICATIONS

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News about the club, and non-scientific aspects of the hobby, can be found in the *Cichlid Blues*, the clubs' semi-monthly newsletter.

Issues of the *Cichlid Blues* are sent to all members, with the exception of foreign members, in the odd numbered months of the year (i.e., January, March, May...etc.).

Announcements, committee reports, Board meeting minutes and other club related news make up the bulk of the newsletters' content. Additionally, a meeting notice and a "Fishmarket" ad section are included in each issue.

Articles, editorials and humorous musings round out the *Cichlid Blues*' offerings, making the newsletter both entertaining and informative.

As with the *Cichlid Communiqué*, article submissions are always welcome by the *Cichlid Blues* editor, but articles are not confined to a scientifically oriented vein.

Special issues of the *Cichlid Communiqué* are published periodically, which include indexes of the previously published *Cichlid Communiqué* articles. The latest of these was the 10-year anniversary issue, published in October of 1990.

## ACTIVITIES

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### CONTEST DESCRIPTIONS

#### Photo & Art Contest

Each year members submit prints, slides and illustrations relating to the cichlid hobby to compete for the top honors, awards and plaques.

#### Writing Contest

Articles found in both the *Cichlidae Communiqué* journal, and *Cichlid Blues* newsletter, are supplied by contributing members, who are automatically entered into the annual writers contest.

#### Fish Raising Contest

Fish of a particular species are distributed at nominal prices to all who wish to participate in a growing contest. Each participant tries to grow his/her fish to the largest size possible in the time allotted, with new prizes for each contest.

#### Fun and Games

Special programs around holidays have become a favorite social event for many members, with special prizes and awards going to winners.

## ACTIVITIES

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### EVENTS

#### PCCC

Pacific Coast Cichlid Conference - Held jointly in 1988 and 1990 with the San Francisco Aquarium Society (SFAS) at the Steinhart Aquarium, California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA.

The PCCC is an all day affair, featuring many speakers on varying subjects related to cichlids and tropical fish keeping in general. It ends with a huge fish auction featuring many rare and exotic species.

#### Cichlid Workshops

These are also all-day events, although they are not quite the same scale as the PCCC. Workshops are held at the regular meeting site and usually features local speakers. Some topics in the past have included collecting trips, spawning techniques, proper bagging of fish, stripping techniques, a talk on genetics by a Ph.D., and many other smaller type talks. It is also very easy to access some of the more advanced hobbyists and get answers to your questions. The workshops are held about every 18 months.

## PUBLICATIONS

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Each month, the club alternately publishes its award winning journal, the *Cichlidae Communiqué*, and its newsletter, the *Cichlid Blues*. *Cichlidae Communiqué* disseminates information about both the science and hobby of cichlids; the *Cichlid Blues* features membership services, club news, a calendar of events and random special features.

Research and observational articles are featured in each issue of the *Cichlidae Communiqué*, which is published during the even numbered months of each year. Here you can find information on specific species, genera or cichlids and aquariums science in general.

Over the years, the *Cichlidae Communiqué* has covered a broad spectrum of topics, from aquarium water quality to travels of collectors to faraway lakes and continents.

Articles are submitted for publication to the *Cichlidae Communiqué* editor, who is always looking for new authors. If you are interested in submitting material, contact any of the publication editors and they will be happy to assist you.

As a PCCA member, you have the opportunity to place up to ten lines of items for sale, or items you are looking for, without cost, in each in a member advertising section included in each publication, called the Fish Market. Additional lines may be purchased at the rate of \$.50 per line.

When you wish to place an ad, please contact the Fish Market chairperson, who will give you an Ad form to complete and return. Please be sure to observe submission deadlines listed in each publication.

## ACTIVITIES

### BAP Point Schedules:

#### Category "A" - 10 Points per Spawn

Cichlasoma nigrofasciatum  
Nannacara                      Neetroplus                      Pseudocrenilabrus

#### Category "B" - 15 Points per Spawn

Apistogramma                      Chromidotilapia                      Cichlasoma                      Heros  
Eutroplus                      Guianacara                      Hemichromis                      Tilapia  
Labidochromis                      Neolamprologus                      Oreochromis  
Pterophyllum                      Steatocranus                      Thysochromis

#### Category "C" - 20 Points per Spawn

Altolamprologus                      Apistogramma                      Aulonocara                      Cichlasoma  
Callochromis                      Copadichromis                      Cynotilapia                      Lethrinops  
Cyprichromis                      Haplochromis                      Spathodus                      Protomelas  
Iodotropheus                      Julidochromis                      Labeotropheus                      Petrotilapia  
Melanochromis                      Lepidolamprologus                                           Otopharynx  
Microgeophagus                      Neolamprologus                      Ophthalmotilapia                      Tropheus  
Papiliochromis                      Pelvicachromis                      Pseudotropheus  
Sarotheradon                      Telmatochromis                      Xenotilapia

#### Category "D" - 25 Points per Spawn

Apistogramma                      Cichlasoma                      Crenicichla  
Cyathopharynx                      Cyphotilapia                      Nanochromis  
Pelvicachromis                      Scianochromis                      Taenicara

#### Category "E" - 30 Points per Spawn

Astronatus                      Buccochromis                      Champsochromis                      Crenicara  
Geophagus                      Rhamphochromis                      Nanochromis nudiceps

#### Category "F" - 35 Points per Spawn

Symphosodon

Uaru

#### Category "G" - 40 Points per Spawn

Cichla                      Geophagus                      Satanaperca

#### Category "H" - 50 Points per Spawn

All cichlids that have not been spawned for the first time by a club member. This is a one time award after the fish has been spawned it will be reassigned to the appropriate category. Club member will also receive a commemorative award certificate.

## ACTIVITIES

### EVENTS (continued)

#### BBQ Social

This is a recent addition to the PCCA calendar. Every year on the Saturday of Labor Day weekend, a BBQ is held at a member's house. This is a purely social event at which the only fish in evidence are in the host's fishroom. This social is for the entire family with games for both the children and the adults.

#### ACA Convention

In 1995, the PCCA hosted the American Cichlid Association (ACA) Convention. This event is an annual event that is held by different local clubs from all over the country. This event drew over 400 registrants and approximately 600 participants. It was possible due to a large group of members helping out with the speakers, the 400+ aquarium fish show, and the 800+ bag auction. This event may be again hosted by the PCCA.

## ACTIVITIES

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### Fundraising Activities - Funded Programs

**F**undraising Activities - These activities are designed to raise money for the club which not only helps to keep the membership dues low, it also is used to fund the programs described below.

Fundraising activities include:

Monthly meeting raffle and auction

Membership Dues

PCCC

Funded Programs include:

*Cichlidae Communiqué*

*Cichlid Blues*

Breeders Award Program (BAP)

Monthly Speaker program

Donations/Awards

Scholarships/Grants

## ACTIVITIES

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### BREEDERS AWARD PROGRAM

The purpose of this program is to promote not only the spawning and raising of cichlids, including the dissemination of fry, the sharing of information and pictures of cichlids, and also recognizing the persons participating in the BAP program through awards. Awards will be given at the 350, 1000, 2000, 3000, 4000, 6000, 8000, 9000, 12000, and 15000 point levels. Special BAP awards may be given annually at the discretion of the BAP Chairperson and the Board of Directors. The BAP Chairperson is responsible for handling all questions and all decisions are final.

All "first spawn" fish will stay in the first spawn category for three months. This means that if someone else had the first spawn, you will still collect the first spawn points for the duration of the three months after the first spawn has been turned in to the BAP Chairperson.

An article that summarizes your observations on keeping the species is worth 50 points. A publishable photograph of the species taken by you is worth an additional 50 points.

Each entry must be accompanied by the donation of at least two fry. All fry that are donated must be larger than 3/4" in length. Points will be awarded for the number of fry donated for auction up to a maximum of six fry per species. Two or three fry will give you 1 times the category points, four or five fry will give you 2 times the category points, and six fry will give you 3.5 times the category points. Half points will be rounded off to the higher number. Special consideration will be given for spawns that are small, and/or the fish are expensive, to receive the maximum number of points (i.e. Tropheus). To receive your points, you must have the Auction Chairperson initial in the appropriate spaces on the BAP Report Form.

If you do not think that you are receiving enough points for a fish, you may "Challenge" the BAP Chairman to prove your case. This means that if you think that the water conditions required more work to maintain or the fish took longer to grow than normal or that the size of the fish was bigger than first thought. The BAP Chairman's ruling is final.

Please enter as much information as you can on the BAP Report Form to allow the BAP Chairperson to properly categorize each fish. To help identify the fish, include a photographic reference (if possible) on the Report Form. For the reference include the book's or magazine's name, page the photo is on, and the date of publication. If this fish is from a known source (i.e... I got them from Joe Fish, or I collected them at Rio Lobo), then include that information as well.