

The Quest

25 year wait

1980's/90's

- I had the privilege of knowing 3 great aquarists who guided me on my path
- They were great in giving advice, assistance and shared their knowledge
- I had joined the local fish club where I was introduced to livebearers
- They suited my water conditions perfectly ,
So I was soon hooked

Three Mentors



Derek Lambert



Ivan Dibble



Mervyn Strange

Goodeids

- Following on from the (Usual suspects)
- My first Goodeid available then and probably now, Ameca's probably the most robust fish I know followed by X.eiseni both had a bad reputation

Once it was noticed I liked these fish

And enjoyed breeding them

I was given the chance to get some different types

Groups

- S.L.A.G
- Livebearer information service
- Basingstoke and district
- London Livebearer Group
- Scottish Livebearer Group
- Viviparous
- British Livebearer Association
- GWG

Old list

Skiffia bilineata A.S.

Skiffia bilineata 'Queretero, 88'

Skiffia francesae 'Rio Teuchitlan, 76'

Skiffia lermæ 'Rancho el Molino, 88'

Skiffia species 'Zacapu, 88'

Xenophorus captivus 'Rio Santa Maria, 68'

Xenotaenia resolanae 'Rio Purification, 76'

Xenotoca eiseni A.S.

Xenotoca eiseni 'Golden Saddle'

Xenotoca melanosoma

Viviparous

Species Maintenance

Programme

list

Allophorus robustus Camecuaro 76'

Allotoca diazi Rancho el Molino 87'

Allotoca dugesi Quiroga 87'

Ameca splendens Rio teuchitlan 66'

Ataeniobius toweri Rio Verde

Chapalichthys encaustus Rio Tanhuato 70'

Characodon lateralis Los Berros 68'

Goodea atripinis A.S

Cont

Goodea atripinnis luitpoldi

Skiffia bilineata A.S

Skiffia francesae Rio Teuchitlan 76'

Skiffia lermiae Rancho el Molino 88'

Skiffia sp 'Zacapu 88'

Xenotaenia resolanae Rio purification 76'

Xenotoca melanosoma

Xenotoca variata A.S

Break

- Several years of fish drought
- A couple of failed re-starts
- But always looking at fish magazines
- Other animals were kept
- None seemed to satisfy
- Eventually an opportunity arose
- Built a fishroom then the search began

Dissapointing

- Local clubs disappeared
- Many people left the hobby
- Many more had passed
- Mainly aquarium strains available
- Fewer collecting trips
- Only a few Goodeids available
- Derek and Mervyn had passed away

Search

- I tried to fill my list from before my break
- Several species were available
- Not exactly the same locations
- Some however remained elusive
- Skiffia sp Zacapu was my goal
- I spoke to James Langhammer who told me there had not been a successful collection since Derek's

Aztec gold

- Yahoo group for Goodeids
- Accepted
- Started to realise there was hope
- Found a few Goodeids
- But some species were not available
- Found there was more of us with a passion for Goodeid conservation
- Then the GWG meetings started

GWG

- Barcelona
- Pont L'evêque with France vivipares
- Vienna Haus des Meeres
- Asperen Poecilia Nederland and KFN



Number 5

Morelia Mexico

IV Viviparous symposium

Mexican and Latin American Ichthyological
Congress

So I had the chance to follow in the
Footsteps of my friend Derek

Journey

- First long haul flight
- Apprehensive about a leg injury
- 24 hour delay
- The rest seemed plain sailing
- Airport to bus station in Mexico city
- Luxury coach travel to Morelia
- Taxi to hotel

Fixer



- Mike knew of my search
- Arranged a trip to Zacapu in addition to the schedule
- And several other places
- The hunt was on

Hit list

- Skiffia Sp Zacapu
- Allotoca dugesii black sport Rancho el Molino
- Allotoca diazi
- Allotoca zacapuensis
- Hubbsina turneri

Lago de Cuitzeo

Wet my net

Neotoca bilineata



Not just fish

Recluse spider



Water scorpion



Zacapu

First sight



Fish



1 species

- *Allotoca zacapuensis*



Rancho el Molino

Well used by the locals



Typical pose



2 species

Allotoca dugesii



Allotoca diazi



Bonus



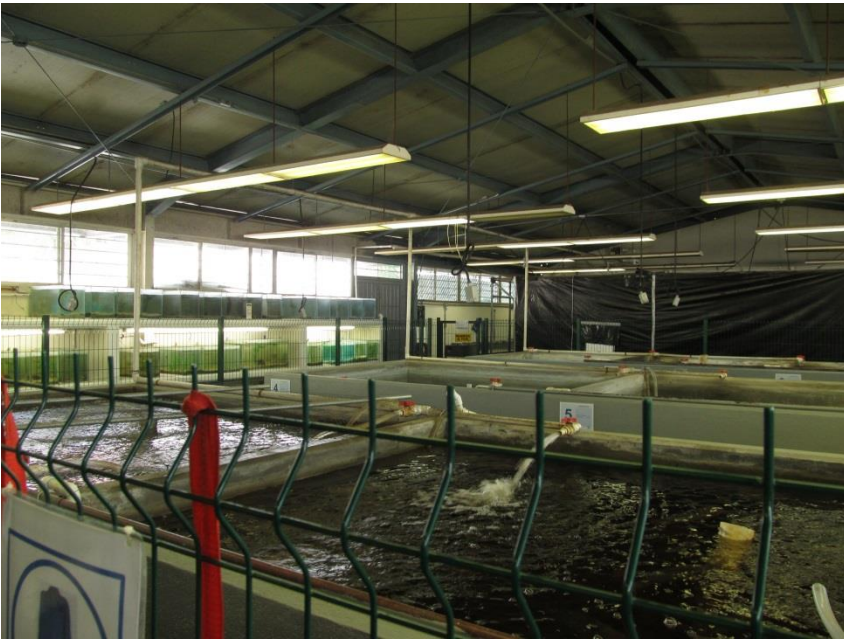
Opopee *Allotoca meeki*



To the lab

I was a little disappointed The pictures we had seen previously showed many more tanks

But the lab was clean and functional with Goodeids



Zacapu at dusk



Darker than it looks



By touch



2 species

Full house +bonus



Home

- I managed to get all 5 species home
- *Allotoca diazi*
- *Allotoca dugesii*
- *Allotoca zacapuensis*
- *Sliffia* sp Zacapu (*lermae*)
- *Hubbsina turneri*(*Girardinichthys ireneae*)

Breeding

- diazi and dugesi quite prolific
- Skiffia sp enough to spread around a few people
- Hubbsina and A.zacapuensis a real struggle
- Made a school boy error of giving away too many fish, I was left with a very small number of each and I am only now seeing and increase in stocks
- It is great to spread new fish around but it

Future



?



And of course ?



- The most important group
- Aquarists and fish keepers
- Unpaid
- overlooked
- Guardians
- of many species
-

Fish Ark !!!



Preservation and Conservation

- Anyone can do it
- Everyone should do it
- Not just the fish
- Locations are as important if not more so
- Unfortunately this is not unique to our beloved Livebearers
- Many freshwater species are in need

**Wild Mexican Livebearers are in serious trouble;
most species are endangered and/or in serious
decline**

**Some are thriving unfortunately ,as they do not
belong there**



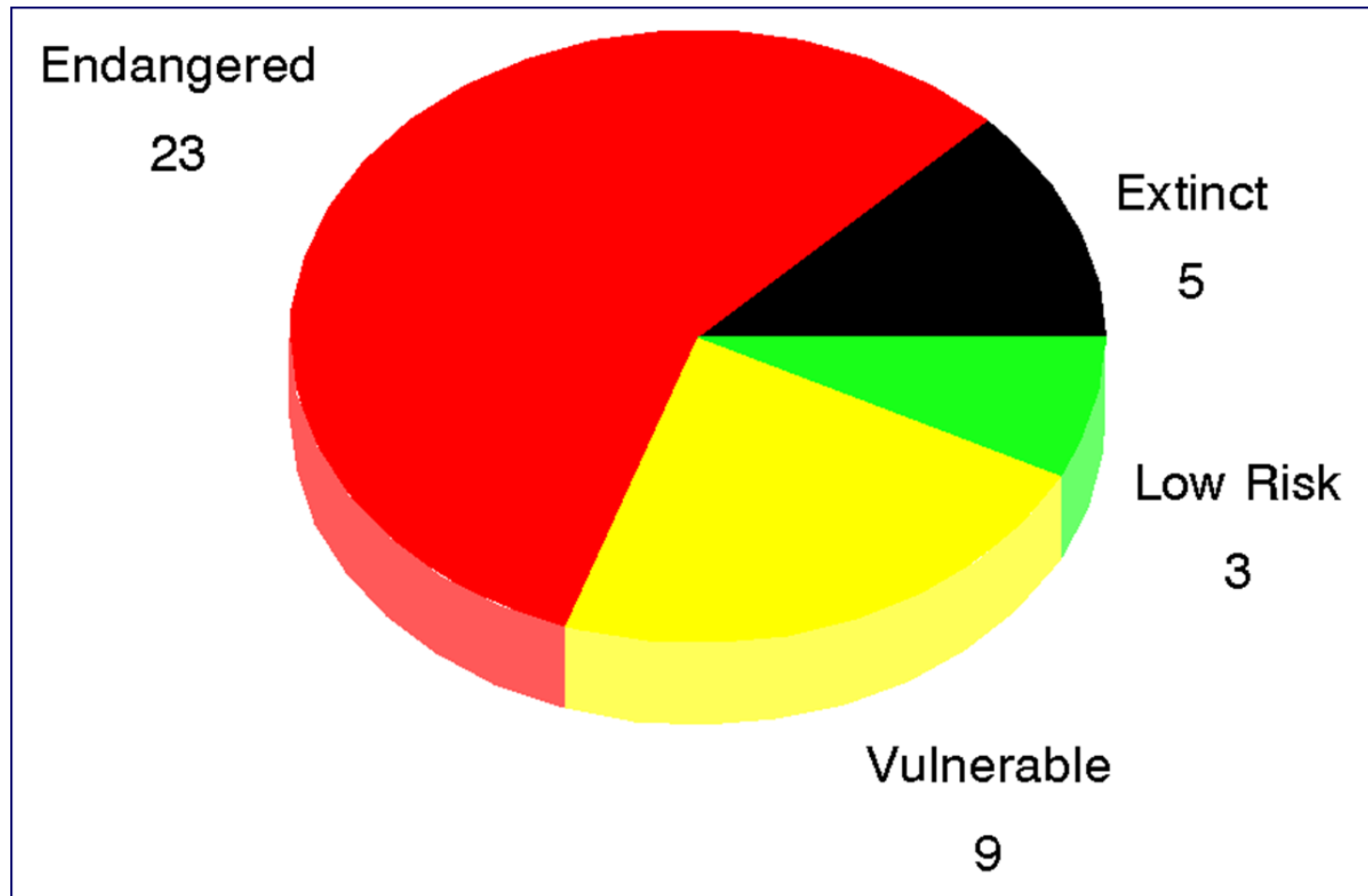
Rubbish and contaminants



Is it all bad ?



2011



Why

- Because We can
- We can make a difference
- Millions of fish tanks
- Thousands of Aquarists
- Thousands of fish breeders
- But only a small percentage are conservation breeders
- Only a small percentage breed livebearers

Why Us

- Governments and politicians are not interested in small fish
- Institutions and Zoos may be interested
- But costs, space and logistics are a problem
- Keepers have multiple tasks not just the fish
- Restrictive flow of livestock

We have

- The expertise and passion
- Dedicated facilities
- Extensive network of breeders
- Free flow of stock
- Information exchange
- Multiple stocks of species
- No as many restrictive problems

How

- A single species tank
- A dedicated fish room
- A classroom exhibit
- Students studying
- Commercially (with care)
- It doesn't matter

Success ?



But

- It needs to be ongoing
- Information kept
- Correct name (latin)
- Location precise
- Year ?
- Collector ?
- Aquarium strains ?

Can it work

- I hope so
- We want it to
- They need it to
- We think it is possible
- They need it to work
- But we are a minority

Obstacles

- Governments
- Industry
- Many locals are unaware or not educated to their plight
- Habitat loss
- Alien species
- Human nature

Reintroduction

- Possible ?
- No habitat
- New
- Alternative location
- Removal of aliens
- Repeat of problem
- survival

Then what

- Monitor
- Maintain
- Learn
- Report
- Analyse
- Modify
- Repeat

But

- Work with locals and land owners
- Educate and explain
- Local support
- Regional council
- Financial incentive
- Funding
- Are we ready and able

Comments

- Questions
- Ideas
- Solutions

Future

- I would like future generations to see these fish, Not in books and pictures but in the wild or at worst in our tanks

