

DATE: SEPTEMBER 1966

MEMO:

TO: All Interested Parties
FROM: Vernon Ogilvie
SUBJECT: Progress Report on the Peacock Bass Project

Considerable work and some progress has been made on the peacock bass project recently. In order to bring those who are interested up to date I am submitting this memo.

NOTE: Since I referred to members of the Cichla genus numerically in my recent report and sent copies to all parties who should be interested, I will continue to use this system of identification.

CICHLA U2: A small number of young fish about one inch long were picked up at Vero Beach, compliments of the Paramount Aquarium, on August 18th. These young fish were placed in a 90 gallon aquarium at my home and fed intensively on young gambusia. These fish were shipped from Puerto Carreno, Colombia, on June 16th at which time they were less than half an inch long. I had predicted that these fish would begin spawning in April (Table 1, page 35).

These young fish were reared from one inch to 2½ - 3 inches in three weeks. On September 9th twenty of these young fish were stocked into pond #18 (Table 2, page 60). Four of these young fish were shipped to the John G. Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, Ill., as none of these fish have ever been represented there before. One each of Cichla U2 and U5 are being reared together in a small aquaria for the purpose of comparison and photography. Specimens of one, two and three inch lengths have been preserved for illustration in future reports.

// CICHLA U6: A friend in Venezuela advised me recently that Hawaii had been working with a Cichla species since 1957 so I wrote them and received a brief summary of their work and a color photograph of the fish they were working with. Their fish came from British Guiana and have grown to 8-10 pounds within three years. On this information I immediately began attempts to obtain fish from British Guiana but thus far have been unsuccessful in doing so. For this reason I made a call to the director of the Hawaiian game and fish division and he agreed to air ship me several dozen young fish as soon as possible.

CICHLA U7: A recent letter from Walter Idel, chief pilot for Mene Grande Oil in Venezuela, informed me that he had found a new species of pavon since I was down there. According to Walt this fish was living in very fast cold water and was an excellent game fish although it did not seem to get bigger than six pounds. I have written Walt for further information on this fish. Walt owns his own plane and has probably fished in more streams in Venezuela than any man alive.

CICHLA U1 and U3: A recent call to Mr. Calvin Lam, Vice President of Ventane Industries in Caracas, Venezuela resulted in his offering to send two men into the Cinaruco River in an attempt to secure adult fish for live shipment to me. The chances of this venture being successful are very slight but at least I will find out how the water conditions and fishing are at this time of year, more on this later.

A copy of my report and a telephone call to Bill Breaker, Director of the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, resulted in his offering to take me to Venezuela with him in November. Mr. Breaker is interested in collecting live specimens of some of the fishes pictured in my report for the aquarium, this would also afford me an ideal opportunity to secure fish for Florida.

All species of Cichla have been on order from Paramount Aquarium for months and as I mentioned earlier young C U2 are the only results so far but Mr. Cochu advised me by phone several days ago that he expected to receive some pavon about the 23rd of this month from Puerto Carreno, Colombia, (page 6 of Peacock Bass Report). Paramounts compound in Puerto Carreno is the only source of fish from the entire Orinoco River drainage and it has only recently gone into operation.

Mr. Bob Kleiser is in Venezuela at this time and had made plans to fish for large pavon while he was there. I talked to Bob a few hours before he left for Caracas and asked him to try to make arrangements through his contacts there to have fish shipped to me. Bob agreed to do all he could along these lines as he is interested from a commercial point since he runs a tackle store in West Palm Beach and the establishment of pavon in South Florida would stimulate the tackle industry.

A call to Dr. Reeves M. Bailey, at the University of Michigan, to discuss the Cichla genus was very interesting and informative. Dr. Bailey suggested that since only three species of Cichla are now accepted in the fisheries literature that I send him specimens for identification. I suggested that it might make more sense for him to send me specimens since I seem to have more information on the genus at this time than anyone else. Doctor Bailey further suggested that we might have better success finding fish from the southern extend of the Cichlas range as they would be more apt to be adaptable to Florida winters. This makes sense if I could secure a stock of Cichla from there which had a good growth potential. Dr. Bailey suggested that I try to secure these fish from Paraguay and/or Argentina, this sounds fine until one considers the fact there are no records of this genus ever occurring in those two countries.

A Captain Rivas in Venezuela is reportedly pond rearing pavon for stocking in rivers where they do not now occur. I have written Captain Rivas in the hopes of obtaining fish. I am not sure what species he is working with.