

The Parosphromenus Project

Newsletter April 2024

Dear members of the Parosphromenus Project.

Welcome

The Parosphromenus Project has now existed for around 15 years, - if we count from the birth of our homepage, but of course the work and idea was formed much before that. However, we look back at a development of which we are quite proud and happy. Even though we do not send out Newsletters as often as we wish we could, development continues slow and steady. But now it is time that we wish to catch up with you sharing the latest developments,



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Changes in the PP structure – becoming an NGO

For some time we have wished to change the formal structure of the Parosphromenus Project. This is basically because we need better options to be able to seek fundings as well as receive fundings and donations. It is also sometimes an advantage to be a more formal structure when you are seeking cooperations with partners.

We did not want to change the way we have worked as an online free network so we had to search a little, and now made the choice to use the option given in Germany of creating a 'Förderverein', (engl : support association) which has as only purpose to support the PP. The PP stays the same, but for legal issues, cooperations and taxation we now have a better foundation. Everyone can donate to us and we will be able to write a donation receipt for tax reduction. (Please check how your country handles this for a german NGO). We also encourage companies and institutions to get in touch for sponsoring or cooperations.

Förderverein Parosphromenus-Project e.V.

IBAN: DE63430609671326555000

BIC: GENODEM1GLS GLS Bank

Celebrating our first sponsor with gratitude

We would like to announce here, that this month we have finalized our first ever contract with a sponsor, - this is a big step for us, - we wish to thank the sponsor, - which is Easyfish, Czech Rep. -

15 years of age - Our homepage is in need for changes

Our homepage – it is getting nearly 15 years since we first launched our website, www.parosphromenus-project.org. Since then it has grown, changed and establish itself as an anchor for our activities and news.

We see the homepage as a very important window for us, - however it is also something which constantly need technical as well as financial support in order to keep being properly updated, and lately this has become an issue which we need to address. In short – theres an urgent need for updating the current version, and this is unfortunately beyond our skills (and money)

The homepage will continue, that is not a question at all, - but at this current moment we are looking at rebuilding the homepage in another format, - possibly wordpress and we are



now working on that.

A decision has been made, that for now, - at least in the beginning, it will only be in English language.

Strategic Framework Asap, Shoal and Mandai

Last autumn we saw the new report from Shoal and Asap

The report from Shoal, Asap and Mandai org. Called 'A Strategic Framework

to accelerate urgent conservation action for ASAP Freshwater Fishes in Southeast Asia

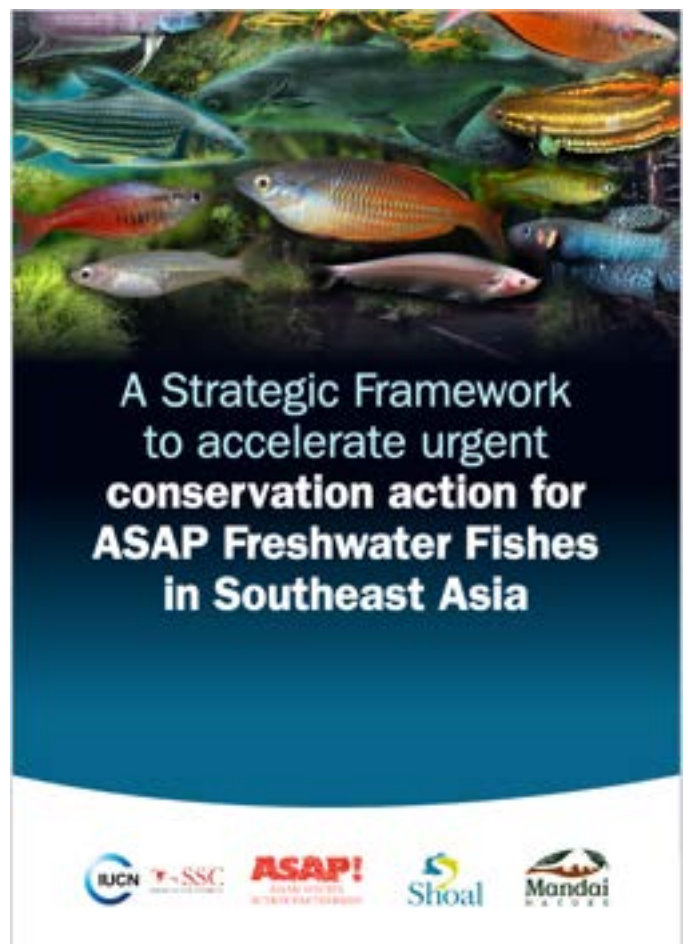
<http://shoalconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/ASAPFreshwaterFishReport2023LoRes.pdf>

In short, for those who have not yet read this, - it is a substantive work which is both an analysis of the situation of 90 specific threatened species of the region, and a strategic framework needed to ensure conservation of these.

For the parosphromenus species it involves the parosphromenus which is on the IUCN Red list as CR endangered, - that is *alfredi*, *quindecim*, *phoenicurus*, *ornaticauda*, *gunawani*.

The species belongs to the group called peatswamp fishes, and the needed efforts around these consists of many factors, - in particular in-situ conservation strategies but also ex-situ conservation or establishing of insurance population.

There is also an underlining of the role of Zoo's and public Aquariums in this. The Parosphromenus Project is mentioned quite a few times in this work, as we are already working towards establishing ex-situ conservation, insurance populations and working with Zoos and Aquariums. The strategic framework, is a long termed plan for how to approach the conservation of these – in particular – 90 species. It seems important and good that such an extensive work has been written, and hope is that it will strengthen cooperations between many partners, and will serve as a guiding factor.



News about *P. gunawani*

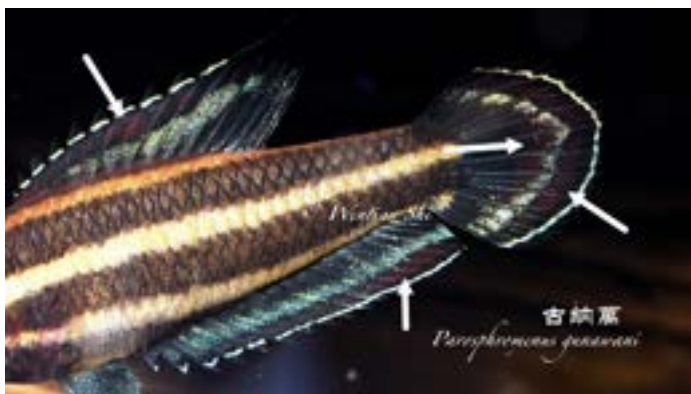
Parosphromenus gunawani has for a long time been a little bit of a 'mystery' to many of us. In fact we only had one photo of *P. gunawani* that with 100 percent showed it. And as it appeared close to the many cf. bintans that is seen in imports around the world, - and we also see many species labelled *P. gunawani* in shops etc – the questions were often raised if a particular fish was or was not real *P. gunawani*.

Of course, one person to look into this is Wentian Shi. And with help from H. Linke, - who originally described the species scientifically, he was now able to locate the precise location, find the fish and document it. And it turns out then, that this has been helpful because it gives more clear identification markers with which to correctly identify the species in the future.



Wentian describes it like this in a post on his channel 'Journey to the waters'

(quote) .1: *the inner part of the blue band on caudal fin has solid dark red color. This is very correct. This red color by gunawani is very solid it is more close to alfredi/tweediei/phoenicurus, just less bright and less intensive. But the red will not disappear in tank and can be easily seen by raw eyes and recorded by camera.*



Not like those cf. bintans which might have some very weak red patches that is hard to record. And of course also distinct from real bintan from Bangka, which is pure black/blue

2: *the blue band of caudal fin is narrow. This is one standard offered by original paper, but after careful check of materials, I think this one is less reliable. Some gunawani indeed have narrow band, some not so narrow. I dont consider this as a reliable way.*

3: the part between two blue bands is PINK, not black.



This is THE EASIEST one. All those "cf bintan/bintan" have a black subdistal band (the part between the blue margin and blue band of the fins). Gunawani has a very distinct pink-rose color on this part. Both original samples published in 2012 and our new materials show this constantly. And it is very easy to recognize.

So, now we know the difference. Gunawani is NOT a blue-black species, It has blue bands and pink edges on dorsal-anal-caudal fins and dark red inner part of caudal. But the location of gunawani is very very very difficult to reach. Most fish sold as gunawani are cf. bintan..... (end quote)

P. gunawani is now hopefully secured in Europe, - two breeding groups has been distributed by PP to two places, - one in France, and the other to Germany. (L.F)



Reassessment of IUCN status of *P. juelinae* and *P.kishii*

From USA, we have now received the news, that a group from William and Mary College supported by PP will be reassessing the status for *P. juelinae* and *P. kishii* under the guidance of PP by Wentian Shi.

This is very good news.

Network in USA – expanding and exploring new ways

Did we tell you about PGRC ?



If we did, well, we will say it again 😊 –

PGRC is created by Brian Martineau, (member of PP Steering Group) who is living in the US and who has the wish to create a Genetic Resource Center for Parosphromenus (PGRC) in the States, - with the aim to contribute to the ex-situ conservation of paros by making it more easy for breeders to connect, and to find paros.

You can find the website here <https://parosphromenuscenter.simdif.com/>

Brian Martineau already has build a profound basis for the conservation of some species, - having *P. cf. phoenicurus*, *P. opallios*, *P. linkei*, and *P. spec. Jambi* in his breeding program, and is offering offspring from these.

Brian also ‘invented’ a new tool, which we find really interesting and inspiring, and we are maybe looking on the sideline to see how it unfolds – who knows, maybe theres something we could learn regarding distribution in Europe ??

Here it is – an online

Parosphromenus Finder APP

A short introduction to the APP, - it is really a basic tool to find, sell and buy Parosphromenus species in the US.

You can find it here

<https://cody3099.softtr.app/>



Cooperations with Zoos and Aquaria

Malmö Museum – a small conservation project with a heartfelt enthusiasm

The connection to Malmö in Sweden has developed over the last couple of years, - since a first visit to Malmö Aquarum Club in 2022. This led to a connection with Malmö Museum, the Aquarium, - a small public Aquarium, but with quite an extensive setup of fresh and saltwater displays.

After planning and thinking for a few months, - they were ready to enter a breeding program for *P. deissneri*, which was then supplied by The PP. Because they also wanted to have a display tank, we offered to supply them with some *P. linkei*. Linkeis is much better suited for display tanks, and they are not necessarily in need of breeding programs. So it was a good choice.

Malmö Museum has since then contributed to census each year, and with astonishing results. From a few pairs of *P. deissneri*, and a bit more of *P. linkei*, they now have over 100 offspring.

In February 2024, I then visited The Aquarium to see the whole setup, and I spent a really nice afternoon being shown around back and front of the Aquarium. And of course I also saw the special little room for the special species with conservation purposes which is kept in the Aquarium. They had a few more freshwater species, but my focus of course was on the paros 😊 ..



The *P. deissneri* breeding set up, and a *P. linkei* breeding tank



The display tank, with 4 *P. linkei* pairs in. It was a little difficult to actually see the fish in this tank, but when you did see them they were looking as beautiful as only *P. linkei* can.

It was quite clear to me, that the Aquarium Team was enjoying their work with the paros, and I went home with a really good feeling, so thank you to Jesper and Joel, from the department.

Citizen Conservation and Nurnberg Zoo - a longer journey but a quick success

In 2021 a pair of *P. bintan* from Bintan Island came to the breeding program of PP through local connections. The pair produced a large number of offspring, and for some time we tried hard to find a breeder who would enter the Core Cooperation Program with this particular species, but it took a while. But through Benjamin Wilden, from Germany, we came in contact with the organization Citizen Conservation – CC – a german breeding coordination programme



“Citizen Conservation” is a network of professional and private breeders. It combines breeding programs designed according to current scientific knowledge with the willingness of people to actively participate in the conservation of biodiversity. Citizen Conservation turns citizens into conservationists: raising awareness, motivating people to get directly involved and bringing together different areas of expertise to make a significant contribution to biodiversity conservation. „

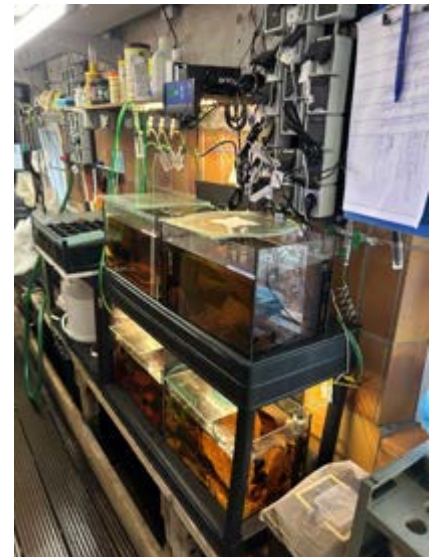
We were able to place *P. bintan* in CC to secure its breeding due to their good institutional network. Thus, Tiergarten Nürnberg was the first CC member to commit to breeding

(<https://citizen-conservation.org/> and (<https://tiergarten.nuernberg.de/en/home.html>))

So after initial contact was made, and an agreement was made, it took a little while to organize the transport. It is of course always important to secure the best possible and safe way, - but finally they went off to Germany. Recently we the report, that it working very well, the fish quite soon went into spawning and they now already have offspring growing up. This is very good news for the *P. bintan* 'Bintan' species.



Photo by Thomas Seitz *P. bintan* 'Bintan' fry and breeding set up with technique.



A few more photos from Tiergarten Nürnberg by Thomas Seitz – The entrance, The display tank (housing *P. deissneri*,) and *P. bintan* 'Bintan' male (H.S)

Aquazoo Düsseldorf A true success story !

In July 2022 three pairs of *P. filamentosus* were transferred and multiplied within a few months. One year later the first fishes entered the 24000 L show tank. Despite ill thoughts, everyone was really happy to see the Paros not shy at all! Approximately 50 specimens showed a wide array of behaviour and last year the first offspring were spotted within the large tank.



Here is as close to nature as we can get and offers opportunities for future research.

The 24000 liter tank - so big that it cannot fit into one photo, very impressive.



The long awaited parosphromenus poster

As you may already know, it has now been possible to finally complete the chart which will show all the known species of parosphromenus – as now it also includes *P. gunawani*.

It will be possible to buy at some point soon, - and with the extra good news, that some of the money paid for this will be donated to the Parosphromenus Project for use at ex. the rebuilding of the homepage.

We are not quite ready for this step in terms of practicalities, but it will be announced as soon as possible on the homepage.



Census October 2024

Just a few words to comment on the latest Census. The last two times has shown a very good participation, as well as a stable, even expanding stock of some of the species which we pay particular notice on through the Core Conservation Programme. *P. alfredi*, *P. deissneri*, *P. bintan*, *P. quindecim* are all doing quite well. There are still some species for which concern is still big, - in particular *P. barbarae*.

Martin Hallmann has kindly offered to continue the work which previously was done by Rafael Egli, - with the commentary, - we are grateful for this.

We see an increasing number of people participating, and in particular we have seen an expansion of very engaged breeders in France and also in the States. This is a very positive development.

In the 3/23 Number of The Macropode in the French version we hope you also read the fine article by Laurie Cattieux, - its good to see and read about the serious wor