

Elegans Newsletter

Notes from the „*elegans* study-group“ of the DKG

No. 8, October 2003

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Dear elegans friends,

summer 2003 has been a hard time for our killies and their breeders. In europe, many did not survive the long hot summer. Especially Peter Venstermans has been hit hard and lost almost all of his stocks. Ewald Tuerk and Horst Tomczyk experienced great losses too. In the US, Monty Lehmann was hit by Hurricane Isabel. Therefore, we have to deal with many losses this year and have a large task before us in replacing those losses over the winter. Everybody is encouraged to help Peter, Ewald, Horst and Monty as good as possible to replace their losses.

But there are also good news. Heinz Ott and Hans-Juergen Blum got a new strain of *A. christyi* from Kisangani by Armand van Deun, Belgium (see report from Hans-Juergen below).

Furthermore, we are happy to welcome some new members:

Armin Knaack:

He is living near Heilbronn and of age 41. His phone number is (+49) 7139-6808. Armin wants to care about the core species and is looking for starter populations. He is also interested in *A. sp.* “Oyo” and *A. elegans* “Boende02”.

Willem van Doodewaard

We are happy to welcome Willem van Doodewaard, Secretary of the KFN, in our study group. It is especially appreciated to have such a good breeder from

the Netherlands joining us. Willem received some *A. elegans* “Lui Kotale” from me and breeds further populations of the *elegans* group (see list).

Changes:

Email of Uli Schliewen has changes to: schliewen@zsm.mwn.de

Email of has changes to: Tomczykmartha@freenet.de

Thorsten Nanninga is available by email at:

aalderk.mudder@ewetel.net

Unfortunately, he does not have any killifishes right now but he wants to stay as an associate member.

Leaves: none

1. Study Group Meeting at the Convention in Muehlheim

Many thanks to Hans-Juergen Blum and Juergen Heidler, who organized the meeting. For all those who could not attend, the major points are summarized below:

Attendants: Hartmut Reusch
Mike Militzer, DKG 1062
Klaus Pietz, DKG 91
Juergen Heidler, DKG 484
Hans-Juergen Blum, DKG 11
Peter Venstermans, BKV
Heinz Ott, DKG 360
Hans Kaempf, DKG 823
Thomas Kraska, DKG 433

The discussion focussed on the following topics:

- I. The 5 core species will be valid furthermore. No changes will be made, even if there are problems with *A. rectogoense* „G 76/11“.
- II. Special awards for long term species maintenance are not required or needed to keep the people involved. Commitment should come by itself.

- III. The dates for the ENL seem to be suitable. Especially for the first issue in the year, the possibility for arranging fish or egg exchanges during the convention should be explicitly mentioned.
- IV. The second yearly issue should be sent out at the beginning of September. This would allow further exchanges before the weather gets too cold. Therefore, the second species maintenance list will be prepared earlier next year.

2. Establishment of *A. elegans* „Lui Kotale“

This strain could successfully be distributed further (see list). It can be considered safe in the DKG.

3. Establishment of *A. elegans* „Inongo“

I have to admit that the project of establishing this strain in the hobby failed. I have just one female left. That's it.

4. New Import of *A. christyi* „Kisangani 2003“

Report of Hans-Juergen Blum

Everybody enjoying *elegans*-group fishes probably was happy by hearing last year that the true „*A. elegans*“ was back. Armand van Deun from Belgium brought them to Europe in spring 2002 (see report of Heinz Ott in DKG-Journal 6/2002).

In the meantime, the strain from “Boende02” is distributed well in the hobby. Furthermore, we want to thank Uli Schliewen for bringing two other strains of *A. elegans*. One of them, the strain from “Lui Kotale”, was distributed fairly well by Axel Schwekendiek.

Armand told us that he would go to the Congo again in 2003. In view of the unstable and dangerous situation down there, we had few hopes for the success of the project. All of a sudden Heinz Ott received an email from Armand on June 06, 2003 directly from Kisangani. This was a real surprise since nobody expected that. Armand already had started collecting killifishes. This was quite difficult because of heavy rainfalls. Rivers and Swamps had high water and the streets and roads were muddy. However, at some locations he was looking for fishes. However, there were either no killifishes to see or there was no chance for

concentrating them in a smaller part. Only a few barbs went into the nets. On their way back from Yakusu to Kisangani (11 km from the Kisangani river crossing of Lindi and Tshopo), no killifish was found. Now, the locals were asked. They confirmed the absence of fishes in that area. But when Armand asked for surface fishes with small points on their heads (Armand was referring to *Epiplatys*), the problem became apparent. The locals believed Armand was asking for some fishes to eat. Now, a small creek which paralleled the main river was visited in the vicinity of the health center. There, “Karuk” (local term) should be present, but only frog eggs and insects were found. But Armand found a small waterhole just 30 cm besides the creek. He could not see what was in the hole. With some effort he collected 8 *Aphyosemions* (7 females of different size and 1 nearly adult male). It was not the blue/grey color phase. There was more red spots on the sides and the caudale was more brown/green with some yellow. But, they were for sure *A. christyi*. They went into a plastic box, stored in Armand's room at the mission of Kisangani. Now, Armand had to go to Goma and North-Kivu for two weeks. He was worrying about his *A. christyi*. Would they survive his absence? The area he was visiting did not bring any *Aphyosemions*. The locals had only few understanding in looking for fishes that were not to eat. A concrete search for *Aphyosemion* would have also led into the region of the “mai mai Guerillas”. After his departure back to Kisangani, plundering soldiers went through the region of Goma.



Pictures of *A. christyi* “Kisangani 2003” from Heinz Ott. Female on the left.

Back in Kisangani there were two nice surprises. Because of good care of the head of the mission, all 8 *christyi* had survived. He has feed them with black mosquito larvae and ants. They were also “domesticated” already and did not jump anymore. But the new ones tried to escape form the tank by continuous jumping. In his absence, a local teacher was instructed by Armand to catch further *christyi* from. He was very eager and caught about 60 sometime very large killifishes. For his efforts he earned 20\$ and was happy ever after. This was a lot of money for him, since government employees usually do not get any money for their jobs. The new *christyi* caused some problems. They refused to eat. Some of them showed injuries which were probably caused during the catch or by jumping. Since the flight back to Belgium was also delayed, Armand had much doubt of brining home all *christyi* alive. Another

problem was the checkpoint for leaving county. Last time, Armand had to leave even his water bottles when he went up the stairs to the plane. With some money and a good hiding place the fishes now headed towards Europe. In his last email from Kisangani we were asked to take over the *christyi* as soon as possible, since Armand had further job obligations in other countries one day after his return. So we went to Leuven the other day and were welcomed with coffee and cake by his wife. It was a very nice and interesting afternoon for us. A friend of Armand already got some of the *christyi*, but around 25 smaller individuals were left for us. We took them all and supposed a slight overhead of males. At home, we distributed the fishes among us and saw that we had 10 male and 15 females. Just perfect.



Picture of *A. christyi* “Kisangani 2003” from Hans-Juergen Blum.

Regardless of their small size we could soon collect the first eggs. We had no losses from the wild caughts during the first weeks. We will soon see the F1-generation sexing out. The shy wild collections developed into beautiful fishes. Feeding is no problem at all. The white mosquito larvae were not viewed as suitable food in the first instance. They simply were to fast. In the meantime,

the *christyi* are heading out of the mop as soon as they see them. Besides live food, they seem to like frozen food as well.

It can be deduced from the above pictures that the new *christyi* Kisangani 2003 are completely different from HZ85/8. We hope being able to distribute the fishes further, but we do not want to loose HZ85/5 instead.

At this point we want to thank Armand again for all his efforts, costs and dangers that he accepted for bringing us the fishes. We hope our small presents tasted well.

5. Core Species and Species Conservation

Some of you may find it obsolete but I want to stress the issue of species conservation in our study group again. We already agreed on a set of 5 core species which were also confirmed at this years convention in may. However, I think we have to review this point in more detail, regarding a) the core species selection we made and b) the process of dealing with species maintenance.

Species	ENL1	ENL2	ENL3	ENL4	ENL5	ENL6	ENL7	ENL8
Christyi HZ85/8	5	8	9	11	10	8	9	6
Cognatum Z82/2	2	4	4	4	2	2	2	2
Congicum Z82/17	6	9	8	8	10	8	11	10
Lamberti G92/4	1	1	1	1	4	3	3	2
Rectogoense G76/11	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	2

Table 1: Development of core species populations since 2000. Numbers representing the number of breeders for a particular species (see prior ENLs).

a) Core Species List.

If we are looking at table 1, we had a high in the number of breeders for core species around the time of the convention in Wilhelmshaven in early 2002. The number of breeders for core species is going down slightly since. An exception is *A. congicum* and if you like also *A. cognatum*. *A. rectogoense* is a core species only since ENL5. So far, we have only good success for *A. congicum* and *A. christyi* only. For

both, more than 5 breeders are active and we should have enough fishes around for viewing these species as safe. This cannot be said for the three other core species. For all of them the number of fishes around is still far too low.

The question is: why is that so? Did we select the wrong core species? There are a lot of *A. lamberti* populations around (for example BSWG 97/9) and also many populations of *A. rectogoense* (for example PEG 95/16) for which we have a lot more fishes than for our counterparting core populations. Even for *A. cognatum* we have a few strains around which are better established than our core species. However, the goal of putting the core species on a stronger base has not been achieved with these stains. And I do not believe that the only reason for this is that they are harder to breed than other (newer) strains.

b) Concept.

If you are looking at the joins and leaves of members in our study groups you can see that we obviously have a core set of permanent breeders now. However, it seems to be a real problematic task to organize fish and egg exchanges among the members. My hope that everybody in the group would at least adopt one core species has not fulfilled so far. Anyway, we should strongly focus on securing at least our five core species more than what we achieved so far. But how to proceed?

Maybe we should think about an alternative concept for achieving our goal of long term species maintenance for our core species. If we do not succeed with the current concept, why not follow the suggestion of Hans-Juergen Blum in establishing a coordinator for each of the core species (or even every species – not population – currently present in our group)? This coordinator should be the central person for coordinating all efforts in breeding the species. He should establish and maintain contacts to all breeders of this species and arrange fish and egg exchanges on a regular basis. Maybe it is easier to deal with a small group of breeders than with such a large one as the whole group that we have now.

I tried to establish a similar approach a few years ago and you can see the results on the DKG-Homepage at <http://dkg.killi.org/killifische/elegans/> on the subpages for the particular species. One coordinator should be available for each species. If I remember correctly, only Ruediger Wagner, Monty Lehmann and me were willing to do this (please excuse me if I

don't remember everybody). The following table summarizes the picture form 2000:

Species	Coordinator
A. chauchei	Ruediger Wagner
A. christyi	Axel Schwekendiek
A. cognatum	Axel Schwekendiek
A. congicum	?
A. decorsei	Axel Schwekendiek
A. elegans	Axel Schwekendiek
A. lamberti	?
A. lefiniense	?
A. margaretae	?
A. polli	?
A. rectogoense	Monty Lehmann
A. schioetzi	?
A. sp. Oyo	?
A. sp. Epoma	?

Maybe we should again switch to this concept. But if we do this, we should find at least one coordinator for each (core) species. I would again serve as the coordinator of ONE species – not more. How about you?

6. Species List

Even if we successfully establishes certain species in the hobby, others have been lost are close to being lost. Special attention is required for all core species (in red). As already stated earlier in this issue, we had major drops for *A. lamberti*, which is currently only with two breeders (Blum and Kraska). *A. rectotogense* is still only with Rosch. Both strains, as well as *A. cognatum*, need much more attention and focus. As you can see from the list, I gave away nearly all my other strains in order to have space available for the core populations. This took almost a year but it is done now. Furthermore, *A. cognatum* “Lake Fwa” also went down seriously. Another open issue is the necessary assignment of all the different *A. christyi* populations of Kinshasa to *A. polli* or *A. shoutedeni*. Isn't *A. shoutedeni* still valid in favor of *A. polli*?

Species – Population	Numbers (m/w)	Name
A. chauchei „Masèpe”	4/4 safe(+) 13/1	Blum Okada Pietz Fuerk Wagner
A. chauchei „Obeya”, RPC 91/6	6/4 1/2(+)	Blum Maesen Ott
A. chauchei „Oltombo”, RPC Z 96/5	7/3 moderate	Blum Kraska Lehmann Wagner
A. christyi „HZ 85/8”	4/4 2/2 safe 4/4 1/0 1/3	Blum Kämpf Kraska Lehmann Ott Fomeczyk Fuerk Ude Wagner
A. christyi “HZ 85/20”		Türk
A. christyi “HZ 85/22”	2/2(+) critical	Kaempf Kraska
A. christyi “alter DDR Stamm”	4/3	Heidler
A. christyi “Kisangani 2003”	5/5 Fry	Blum Ott
A. christyi “Kinshasa 2002”		Pelletier
A. christyi “Kinshasa 2003”	7 fry	Weber
A. sp. aff. christyi “Inkole OJ 8/03”	1/1 (bad condition)	Weber
A. cognatum “Gilima”, Z 91/3	1/3(+) 3/3 33 fry	Maesen Ott Weber

A. cognatum "Kinshasa" CI93	safe 1/1 (8)	Okada Weber
A. cognatum „Madimba“	8/2(+) (+)	Pietz Türk
A. spec. aff. cognatum "Lake Fwa"	9/2 safe 3/2	Kaempff Kurachi Lehmann Maesen Okada Rosskopf Tuerk Venstermans
A. cognatum "Kenge"	5/1	Ott
A. cognatum "Kinsuka", WF 2001	safe	Blum Pelletier
A. cognatum "Kinsuka"	Good numbers 1/3(+) Good numbers	Maesen Puetz Ude Wagner
A. cognatum "Z 82/2"	4/5 Good numbers	Heidler Wagner
A. cognatum "CI99"	2/2(+)	Venstermans
A. cognatum "CI 2001"	(+)	Tuerk
A. cognatum "River Maindombe OJ 8/03"	1/1 (fry)	Weber
A. cognatum TAAG 2000/1	Available in BKA	Addis
A. congium „Z 82/17“	> 8/8 2/5 8/3 gut 3/3 1/1(+) 17/4(+) 3/3 7/9	Blum Heidler Kaempff Kraska Lehmann Maesen Pelletier Pietz Puetz Tomczyk

		Venstermans
A. decorsei „Bangui“, KCF 5	moderate 2/0(+)	Kraska Tomczyk Ude
A. spec. aff decorsei "Lobaye"	10/5 3/3 safe 5/5 (20+) 5 male	Blum Kaempff Kraska Reusch Lehmann Okada Weber
A. decorsei "Kapou I", RCA 91/1	3/3 moderate safe 2/2 (+)	Addis Blum Kraska Lehmann Okada Venstermans Weber
A. decorsei "RCA 82/3"	critical 2/1	Kraska Ott
A. elegans "Boende 02"	10/5 okay 20/15(+) 20 fishes, almost no females 5/0 10/5	Blum Kraska Maesen Ott Schwekendiek Tomczyk Wachters Wagner Venstermans
A. elegans "Inonogo"		Schwekendiek
A. elegans "Lui Kotale"	5/20 2/8 3/4	Schwekendiek Ott Reusch Venstermans

		<u>Wagner</u>
A. lamberti "BBA/GAB/90/1"		Addis
A. lamberti „BSWG 97/9"	4/3 1/1 safe 1/2 (+)	<u>Doodewaard</u> Kurachi Pelletier Rosskopf Fuerk <u>Weber</u>
A. lamberti „G 88/7"	7/4(+)	Kaempff Lehmann
A. lamberti „G 92/4"	2/2 moderate	Blum Kraska Tomczyk
A. lamberti "GEB 94/7"	2/3	Kaempff Türk
A. lamberti „GHH 97/11"	9/6	Addis Blum Venstermans
A. lamberti "PEG 96/4"	1/6	Kaempff
A. lamberti "TDK 97/17"	3/3 (+)	Lehmann <u>Weber</u>
A. lefiniense "CI 96"	3/3 moderate 0/1	Blum Kraska Tomczyk Ude
A. margaretae "HZ 85/14"	9/5 2/4(+) critical 2/2	Blum Kaempff Kraska Ott
A. spec. "oyo" ,RPC 91/8	3/3 3/3(+) Good numbers 1/1	Addis Blum <u>Doodewaard</u> Kaempff <u>Kraska</u> Ott

	25/5 2/2 1/0 4/3	Pietz Tomczyk Ude Venstermans Wagner
A. polli "N'jili", CI Z 93 (Type loc.)		Kraska
A. polli "N'jili", WF 2001	5/3 3 fry	Blum <u>Doodewaard</u> Ott <u>Venstermans</u>
A. polli "N'jili" (T.t)		Kraska Venstermans
A. polli "CI 99"		Lehmann
A. polli "CI 2000" ?	1/1	Tomczyk
A. polli „CI01"	safe	Okada
A. rectogoense „BBA/GAB 90/27"	2/2 0/3	Brown Kaempff Lehmann
A. rectogoense	24/2	Pietz
A. rectogoense "G 76/11"	Only 1 male left safe	Blum Pietz (?) Rosch
A. rectogoense "G 92/5"	0/4	Kaempff
A. recotgoense „G 92/11"	1/3(++)	Kraska Wagner
A. rectogoense „GHP 80/30"	- 2/2 Good numbers	Addis Ott Puetz
A. rectogoense "PEG 95/16"	3/3 2/5 (+) safe 1/2	Kaempff Lehmann Ott Rosskopf Fuerk <u>Weber</u>
A. schioetzi		Pelletier

A. schioetzi „C 85/1”	2/1 5/0 1/0	Blum <u>Pelletier</u> Ude
A. schioetzi “Z 91/1”	6/6 2/2 10/5 0/1	Blum Maesen Ott Ude
A. spec. “Epoma” “RPC 91/1”	6/4 4/3 gut 5/2 8/2	Blum <u>Doodewaard</u> Heidler Kraska Ott Ude Wagner <u>Venstermans</u>

Legend:

Core Species

Lost Species/Breeders

New Breeder

6. Offers/Requests

Yoshimitsu Kurachi is looking for:

- A. christyi HZ 85/8

Peter Venstermans is looking for:

Peter lost almost all his killis during summer. It would be nice, if you could provide any spare fishes to allow him developing new strains. Please contact Peter directly if you are willing to help.

Willem van Doodewaard offers:

- Lamberti BSWG 97/9

Willem van Doodewaard is looking for:

- christy
- decorsei

- rectogoense
- schioetzi
- cognatum
- spec. Lake fwa
- margareatae HZ 85/14
- congium Z 2/17
- chauchei

Axel Schwekendiek is looking for:

- A. lamberti „G92/4“
- A. sp. „oyo“

7. Last but not Least

I really hope that you enjoyed ENL no. 8. But more important, I hope that you think a little about what is said here. Working in and for such a specialized study group like ours makes only sense for me, if you too provide something to the group. This may be fishes, opinions, or both. I would highly appreciate a detailed discussion about our core species concept in order to achieve more than what has been done up to now in regard to saving our populations. For me it is not enough anymore to write an ENL every 6 months without getting reply (in terms of action!). Almost all of you do have internet access and it should be more than easy to open a discussion on a specific issue or to arrange fish and egg exchanges. Why don't you do that? Do you need a study group at all? If so, why?

Best regards,
Axel

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<http://dkg.killi.org/killifische/elegans/index.html>

<http://nuke.killi.org/>

Bondorf, Oktober 12, 2003