

## ARCHOCENTRUS SP. "HONDURAN RED POINT" A CONVICT, OR NOT?

Sam Borstein, Age 13

During the 2004 Cichlid Classic, I traded Eric Hanneman a bunch of *Otopharynx tetraspilas* (See Cichlid Archive on [gcca.net](http://gcca.net)) for four 1-1/2 inch *Archocentrus* sp. "Honduran Red Point". At first I thought that I had received, normal convicts (*Archocentrus nigrofasciatus*, also in the archive). Not having bred convicts, and liking their parental behavior, I was okay with that. I put them in my 55-gallon tank to grow out with some *Mbunas*. They were growing fine and were holding their ground. They looked like normal convicts with black bars. Eventually, when the fish were around two inches, the fish started turning blue and the lines began to compress and turn into dots along the body. They also were showing metallic green fins and a reddish dot on the stomach.

I e-mailed Eric at that time and asked what exactly the fish was. He told me that they were an undescribed species and thought that they are a new species, not a location variant. About a month later, the color was really showing in the fish. I had just bred *Archocentrus centrachus* in a 20-gallon tank and was ready to move out the parents and grow out the fry in another tank.. I put the Red Points into the twenty after I had cleared it, hoping they would breed in a species tank. I furnished the tank with flower pots, slate, and other hiding places. At first, they freaked out like most fish do in a new tank, but settled down after a week. I fed



*Archocentrus* sp. "Honduran Red Point" in breeding dress.

Spectrum and baby brine shrimp to them. One Red Point really fattened up and I then saw "tubes". The day before the fish bred, they returned to their juvenile coloration— black bands with no other dominant color— and a black-grey face. The fish bred on the underside of a piece of vertical slate leaning against the side of the tank. The Red Points laid around thirty

eggs and about twenty-five hatched. The parents took good care of the fry. Interestingly, the parents showed no aggression to the other Red Points in the tank, very uncommon for a convict-like species. I later raised up the fish and BAP'd them. I gave the parents to my Dad, Rick Borstein. He put them in a twenty and they took about a month to settle down. He eventually fattened them up and they spawned. They laid around the same number of eggs, and had about the same hatch rate. Still, they showed no aggression. My Dad will be BAPing them at the February meeting if you are interested in the fish.

### **What Exactly Are Red Points?**

There are some people who believe that *Archocentrus sp.* "Honduran Red Point" is the same as the Convict, but there are others who believe it is a new species. After observing these fish for some time, I believe that this is a new species. The behavior of the Red Point is unlike Convicts.

- + Although Convicts and Red Points are both great parents, their behavior when caring for young is much different. The Red Points really are not aggressive while spawning. The Convict will kill anything in the tank with it while spawning.
- + The Red Points are a lot more timid and spend a lot of time hiding. Although the Red Points will hold their ground, they will not be the most dominant fish.
- + I believe Red Points have different food preferences than Convicts. They were always picking at algae and sifted through the substrate much more than Convicts.
- + There are physical differences between Red Points and Convicts. Certainly, the color and color pattern are different. I believe that the mouths are a little rounder on the Red Points.
- + Convicts have much larger spawns. When I bred Convicts, the first spawn from a young pair was over 200 eggs, compared to the Red Points 30-40.

I have heard that Red Points are very susceptible to ich, although I have not personally seen it on this fish.

I highly recommend this fish. It is a nice fish with interesting behavior. If you are interested, *Archocentrus sp.* "Honduran Red Point" is available through the club, so you can probably pick them up at a club event. Check the Cichlid Classifieds at [www.gcca.net](http://www.gcca.net).

### **Meeting New People**

If you go to the Cichlid Classic, try to meet the speakers and some out of town visitors. It's a great way to make friends. There are many people from Michigan, Iowa, and Indiana that come to the Classic. I met Eric Hanneman, from Oregon, at the Classic last year when he was one of our guest speakers. Later, when I went to the ACA in Denver, I traded with him again. This is a great way to get advice and learn about fishkeeping techniques. With some advance planning, you can get fish that sometimes aren't available in our area. 🐠🐡