

# *Synodontis galinae*

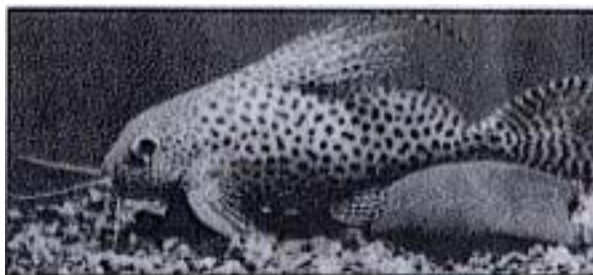
By

Harro Hieronimus

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We received these interesting catfish by chance, they came together in a box with some specimens of *Synodontis eupterus* which had been caught in 1985 in the White Nile. At that time it were still subsadult fish, and the differences between the two species were not as striking. The only difference was that the *S. galinae* looked somewhat lighter than the other fish. But at that time we thought that this was the result of stress during the transport - the colours may change through that slightly.

But during the growth of both species the difference become more and more striking. The body of *S. galinae* was rather massive, but the head remained small and little more flat at the tip of mouth. The "sailfin" dorsal was not directed as directly to the top as in the other species and the last ray was somewhat longer and "looked" downward. The caudal fin shows the large serrations typical for the species. The pectoral fin muscles were very strong so that the catfish could hold against strong current.

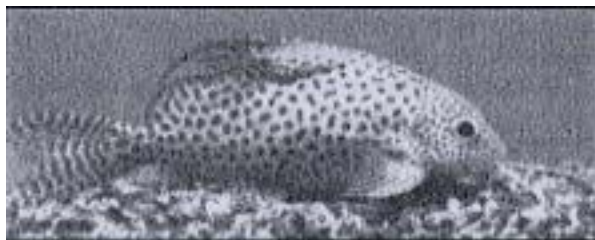


*Synodontis galinae* - Female

A very special feature of this species - colouration. The purple body colour and the fins with dots in the colour "Bordeaux red" are typical.

*Synodontis galinae* Kochetov sp.nov. attain maturity with their 3<sup>rd</sup> year of life. The body length reaches from 9 to 15 cm and varies. The females are not as slender as the males, and the colouration of the males is much more intensive.

To produce offspring the fish were treated with hypophyse hormone suspension of the European catfish (*Silurus glanis*). Afterwards the eggs were fertilized with sperms with the so called "dry" method. The female was 14 cm long and produced 700 eggs. But only in 5% of the eggs fertilization had been successful. The egg development lasted 24 hours at a water temperature of 27°C. Starting at their third day of life the larvae started to feed on white mosquito larvae.



*Synodontis galinae* - Male

Normally the mature female is chased by several males through the aquarium. The reproduction can be stimulated with fresh, soft water and an increased temperature. The fry are active during the night, therefore the lighting must be not too strong, better very weak.

Adult fishes inhabit a certain territory and keep close to various hiding places like caves, grottos, tubes, etc. But they are absolutely peaceful to other fish species in the aquarium.

“With the mouth to the top”, i.e. upside-down, the fish “migrate” rather rarely, generally only while searching for food. With the help of the swim-bladder the fish can produce rather loud sounds. With the help of the pectoral fins - additional crackling and squeaking. In nature these fish can produce weak electrical impulses which may be very useful in turbid water.

Translation from Russian to German: O. Grineva

Translation from German to English: H. Hieronimus

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**Editors Note:** Since receiving this article from Harro, there have been a number of suggestions on the internet that this fish is in fact, *Synodontis eupterus*. No doubt the rumble in the jungle will continue until someone proves the right or the wrong of it.

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