

"BETTER BREEDERS"

I recently read a statement that said the **largest fish** in a lake are the best to keep as **breeding stock** and that fishermen should **take** the **smaller fish home to eat**. I believe the big, old fish are the poorest breeders of all. I have fair knowledge and experience of fish breeding and have kept and bred tropical fish since 1952. Recently I was awarded recognition for breeding and raising 420 species of tropical fish over many years by the Federation of American Aquarium Societies through their Breeders Award Program. I can categorically state that **young fish are the best breeders**. Their **young are more vigorous** and able to survive than fry of large, old fish, if they breed at all. Most commercial tropical fish hatcheries will discard their breeding stock well before they are half their normal lifespan, since they become less fertile and their fry have greater percentages of mutants. Even though **old large fish** may lay more eggs, it is not efficient for hatcheries to use them as breeding stock when the **hatch rate is poor and the fry are not as vigorous**. Imagine in the future if we send people by space ship to colonize Mars. Would we send 20 year olds, or 40 year olds? From which group would we expect the healthiest kids? We **should not feel guilty if we keep a trophy or 2** upon occasion for the frying pan!

Chase Klinesteker



Wayne Dylo, with old Mona Lake Walleye