

NANFA '96

National Meeting Report

by

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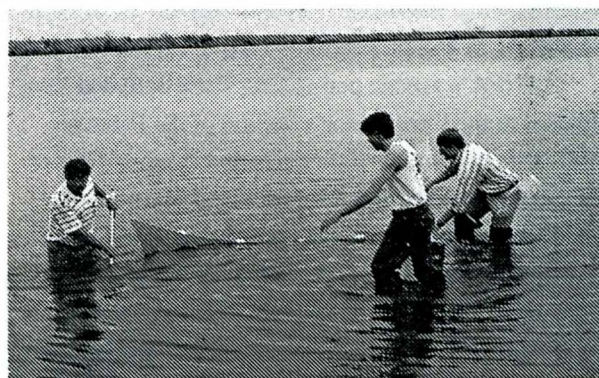
The NANFA '96 National Meeting took place in the New Orleans area on the weekend of June 14th through 16th. We had a nice turnout, with some members coming from as far away as New Hampshire and Wisconsin to the north, Kansas to the west, and all areas in between. The meeting was a casual, non-business affair, and we relied on our attendees to let us know what they wanted to do and see.

On Friday—"check in" day—we visited the Aquarium of the Americas, on the Mississippi Waterfront. The Aquarium is truly impressive, and includes a display of many of our southern native fishes, including some huge blue (*Ictalurus furcatus*) and channel (*I. punctatus*) catfishes. We were also impressed with the Amazon section, which featured red-belly piranha (*Pygocentrus nattereri*) and giant red-tailed catfish (*Phractocephalus hemiliopterus*). Other exhibits focused on fish of Central and South America, the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico. Also on display were the area's world famous white alligators, and temporary exhibits of fish mating habits and jelly fish. Afterwards we had dinner at one of the local restaurants on the shore of Lake Pontchartrain and feasted on some of the region's traditional seafood delights.

On Saturday morning we held a brief "General Session" during which we discussed the field collection trips we had planned for the next day. The session featured door prizes awarded to some of our lucky participants. One of the prizes, an especially nice knife and

sheath, was donated by the Memphis Net and Twine Company. Ric Post of Houston was the lucky winner.

Our NANFA expedition then headed to the North Shore area of Lake Pontchartrain in search of local native fish species. From the freshwater sites, we collected a small alligator gar (*Atractosteus spatula*), three or four species of sunfish, pygmy sunfish (*Elassoma zonatum*), least killifish (*Heterandria formosa*), three *Fundulus* species (*chrysotus*, *notti* and *olivaceus*), pirate perch (*Aphredoderus sayanus*), shadow bass (*Ambloplites ariommus*) and mosquitofish (*Gambusia affinis*).



From left to right, B. G. Granier, Ray Wolff and Rik Post bring in a seine-ful. Photo by Gary Carbonneau.

The fresh-to-brackish water sites yielded an impressive diversity of species. We were especially impressed with the wild-type green sailfin mollies (*Poecilia latipinna*). These came from Lake Ponchartrain, where the species was first collected and described.

Later, we collected gulf killifish (*Fundulus grandis*), rainwater killifish (*Lucania parva*), and sheepshead topminnow (*Cyprinodon variegatus*). We also collected a few specimens of the Gulf pipefish (*Syngnathus scovelli*). This species is a member of the seahorse family, and several of the males we caught were carrying eggs!

Plants we observed included Bacopa, Ludwigia, Naja, hornwort, and the carnivorous pitcher plant.

That same weekend, the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists (ASIH) were in New Orleans for their convention. The group was kind enough to provide us with a room in which we could hold a cocktail party and spend time with the NANFA members who were also with ASIH but were unable to join us for our other activities. There was plenty of food, beer and soft drinks available, as well as the company of plenty of "fishy" characters.



Annual meeting dinner guests included (on the left, from front to back) Kimberly Lund, Ray Wolff, Della Wolff, B. G. Granier, Judy Lund and Garold Sneegas. Seated at the head of the table was Robert Rice, and proceeding clockwise was Gary Carbonneau, Jean Carbonneau, John Ben Williams, Mary Williams, Frances Williams and Ben Williams. Photo by Warren H. Lund, Jr.

Sunday morning was reserved for rest and relaxation, and the preparations for the NANFA cookout that afternoon. Everyone met at my house for a feast of New Orleans-boiled crawfish, Cajun jambalaya, sandwiches, barbecued hamburgers and other goodies. At about 3 p.m. we held the raffle drawing. The top prize was a beautiful 5-piece set of darter prints signed and numbered by the artist, NANFA member Joe Tomelleri, which he had generously donated for the raffle. A bathing beauty in a bikini (6-year-old Kimberly Lund) drew the winning name. The lucky winner was Laura Tessler of Corvallis, Oregon. Congratulations, Laura!

Although NANFA '96 is over, it is far from forgotten. Everyone enjoyed themselves so much that they want to do it again this year. For those of you who missed out last year, we hope you'll be able to join us for NANFA '97, August 8-10, 1997, in Portland, Oregon. (Details and registration form are at the bottom of page 34). Even though the '96 meeting was a success, this year's will be even better. Bring the family, as we'll have something to offer everyone. We hope you will join us.

I would like to thank the following for their contributions to the NANFA '96 National Meeting:

- B. G. Granier, for his assistance in coordinating NANFA '96 and for being our collection tour guide.
- Joe Tomelleri, for his generous donation of the five signed and numbered darter prints for the raffle.
- Memphis Net and Twine Company and Mr. Frank Gibson, for their kind donation of the knife and sheath for one of our door prizes. The Company's catalog, incidentally, lists an unbelievably large selection of nets. They will help you design any specialty net you desire. For a catalog, write P.O. Box 8331, Memphis, TN 38108; or call the toll free number, 1-800-238-6380. Mention NANFA when you order.
- Robert Rice and Garold Sneegas, for staffing the NANFA Booth at the ASIH Convention. Their efforts netted us some new NANFA members.
- Bob Cashner and ASIH, for their donation of a room to use for our NANFA social.
- And everyone who participated in NANFA '96, for helping to make this event a success!

Thank you!



Rik Post helps young Ben Williams inspect the contents of a dip net while (from left to right) Mary Williams, Frances Williams, and B. G. Granier look on. Photo by Gary Carbonneau.