

HOTWGPS Newsletter

Volume 14 issue 1

January 2022

HOTWGPS Events

Happy New Year and hopefully, it will be a little bit closer to “normal” whatever that was. Our next meeting will be on January 18th at 6:30 PM. We will be meeting at the Lake Waco Wetlands education center 1752 Eichelberger Crossing.



Membership dues are due January 1 and must be paid by February 1, 2021 for your membership to remain current.

Family \$24.00

Individual \$18.00

Non-Voting associate \$12.00

Bring your dues to the meeting on the 18th or

Mail your check to HOTWGPS, 700 Fox Ridge Rd., Lorena, TX 76655



Pond Vac

As a reminder, this is a “Members Only” benefit. You can rent (\$5.00 for up to 72 hours) this super-duper pond cleaning machine very reasonably! John Enders is the “official pond Vac keeper”. Call him 254-848-9596 or send him an email at jnenders@aol.com to schedule your time with the machine. One note of caution when using the pond Vac, watch how much water you are removing from your pond!! It works so well sucking up the “yuk” that one can easily forget how much water is also being removed! That is the voice of experience talking!!



This from Texas Invasives I-Wire Dec 2021

Armored Catfish (*Hypostomus Plecostomus* and *Pterygoplichthys* spp.)



Sailfin catfish (*Pterygoplichthys* sp.). Credit: USGS.

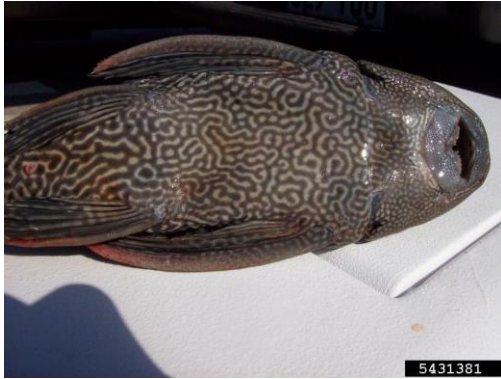
Armored Catfish (Family: Loricariidae) are also commonly referred to as plecos, algae-eaters, and suckermouth catfish. They are predominantly algae eaters with a noticeable sucker located ventrally on the head. Loricariids are mostly nocturnal and can range in size from 3 inches to over 3 feet. Their flattened ventral surface allows the fish to use their suckers on most substrates. The adipose fin has a spine, and the pectoral fins have thick toothed spines that are used for locomotion and male-male competition. *Hypostomus plecostomus* (Common Pleco) and *Pterygoplichthys anisitsi* (Paraná Sailfin Catfish) are Loricariids that are well established in Texas. They are often confused with one another because the black-lined patterns can vary significantly in both species and can resemble one another.

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Mouth sucker on ventral surface of southern sailfin catfish (*Pterygoplichthys anisitsi*). Credit: USGS.

Loricariids are cavity builders and can lay more than 300 eggs in their nests, which are guarded by the males. This burrowing behavior can lead to bank erosion and collapse. This increases turbidity, which can increase water temperature and decrease oxygen levels. Their successful breeding can cause native fish populations to be outcompeted and become reduced. Loricariids can also withstand a wide range of ecological conditions. For example, their large vascular stomach allows the fish to gulp in air and survive out of water for more than 20 hours.

Loricariids can be found in most freshwater habitats in tropical Costa Rica, Panama, and South America, but many species have small natural ranges. They can also be found in some brackish water habitats. Armored Catfishes are now established in many spring-influenced habitats in Texas, including: San Antonio River (Bexar County), Comal Springs (Comal County), San Marcos River (Hays County), San Felipe Creek (Val Verde County), and in the bayou and canal systems in the Houston area. It is believed that these fish were purchased from pet stores and dumped into

local creeks or rivers when the fish grow too large for the aquarium.

For more information regarding management and removal, see the texasinvasives.org info page [here](#). If you believe you have found armored catfish of any kind, please email a picture and the location it was found to invasives@shsu.edu.



This from the Pond Guy

What can I do to prevent string algae from growing in the winter?



A: Even in the cold of winter, string algae can grow in your water garden. All that the green nuisance needs to thrive is the right amount of nutrients and sunlight. So, what can you do to prevent it? You have three options in your pond management toolbox:

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Seasonal Defense, barley straw extract, and a three-in-one pond tool.

Boost Your Bacteria

First of all, you'll need to control the nutrients – or the food that the algae eat – in your pond. Because the beneficial bacteria that break down those nutrients go dormant in the winter, now's the time to add some Seasonal Defense (as long as your pond isn't frozen over, of course). It contains bacteria that prefer cooler temperatures. They'll accelerate the decomposition of leaves, scum and sediment that feed algae, reducing its growth to a minimum. (Editor's note: I use Microbe lift Fall & Winter prep)

Add Barley Straw

If you have a small water garden, like a koi pond that's less than 10,000 gallons, The Pond Guy Barley Extract provides an all-natural solution for maintaining clean, clear water throughout the winter. Available in bales, pellets and as an extract, it works by releasing compounds that improve water clarity, leaving you a clean and clear pond. The extract form is easy to use: Pour directly into the water and repeat every few weeks.

Manually Remove It

Should string algae form, you can manually remove it by wrapping it around an algae brush, like the one included in the 3-in-1 Interchangeable Pond Tool, and yanking it out of the water. The telescoping handle will add 5 feet to your reach, allowing you to reach those hard-to-access patches of weeds.

Unfortunately, if ice is covering your pond, there's not much you can do to remove that string algae. Plan on removing it during your

spring clean-out process. The sun will return soon enough!

(editor's note)



This is the tool I use to remove the string algae from my pond. It is a plastic rake attached to an extension pole to allow me to reach the whole pond.

Killing string algae only adds to the excess nutrient problem by the decaying algae. Manually removing the algae will prevent adding more food to keep the darn stuff growing!

Points To Ponder

America is great because America is good. If America ever ceases to be good, it will cease to be great."

Alexis de Tocqueville

If it be asked, what is the most sacred duty and the greatest source of our security in a Republic? The answer would be an inviolable respect for the Constitution and Laws."

Alexander Hamilton

Words of Wisdom from a Tree

Stand tall and proud

Sink your roots into the earth

Be content with your natural beauty

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Go out on a limb
Drink plenty of water
Remember your roots
Enjoy the view!



On the lighter side

Ole and Sven each needed a loan for \$10,000, so they went to the bank. Sven went in first. "What do you do for a living?" asked the bank manager.

"I'm a pilot," said Sven.

"Well, that's a good profession," said the manager and he gave Sven his loan.

Then Ole went in to ask for his \$10,000. And what do you do for a living?" the manager asked him.

"I'm a lumberjack," he replied.

"Well, I can't give a lumberjack that kind money," said the manager.

"Vell, what's da deal vith dat?" said Ole. If I don't cut da wood, Sven can't pile it!"



A doctor examined Lena after she was rushed to the emergency room, and then took Ole aside and said, "Ole, I don't like the looks of your wife at all."

..Vell, me neither Doc," said Ole, "but she's a great cook and really good vit da kids."



Ole was visiting with his grandson Little Ole and asked him, "Boy, how many miles dew yew walk ta school."

"About half a mile Grandpa," said little Ole. ..When I vas yur age, I valked 8 miles to school every day," Ole told him. "Boy, what are yur grades like?"

"They are mostly B's," the boy told Grandpa Ole.

..When I vas yur age I got all A's," Ole answered. Boy, haf yew ever gotten into a fight?"

"Only once and the boy beat me up," Little Ole admitted. ..When I vas yur age I vas in a fight every day. Boy, how old are yew?"

"Nine years old," the boy answered.

To which Ole replied, "Vell, when i vas yur age I vas eleven!"



Church Bulletin Bloopers

Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

The ladies Bible Study will be held Thursday morning at 10:00. All ladies are invited to lunch in the fellowship Hall after the B.S. is done.

The church garage sale will be held this Saturday. This is a good chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

During the absence of our pastor, we enjoyed the rare privilege of hearing a good sermon when J.F. Stubbs took over our pulpit.



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Please support these businesses who have agreed to give our members a discount at their stores

Bonnie's Greenhouse
Sandra & Johnny Killough



5198 Orchard Lane
Waco, Texas 76705

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254-799-5411 Fax
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Bonniesgreenhouse.com



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RobinsonGreenhouse@gmail.com • Fax 254.666.0919

Steve Kainer
Owner/General Manager



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