Keeping the Jewels of the Reef: The Anthias of the Genus *Pseudanthias* - Part 5

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popular anthias for the home aquarium

While the genus *Pseudanthias* is the primary focus of this series, there are a handful of other anthias genera that are available to hobbyists.

For example, the only member of the genus *Nemanthias*, the Threadfin Anthias (*Nemanthias carberryi*), shows-up in the trade on occasion. It is a resident of the Indian Ocean and while it can be successfully kept in the home aquarium, it tends to be too challenging for the neophyte anthias-keepers. There are also several species in the genus *Luzonichthys* (commonly known as the slender anthias) that appear in the fish trade. They tend to be fairly durable aquarium inhabitants and their husbandry requirements are similar to that of the *Pseudanthias spp.*. The males of the Sailfin Anthias (*Rabaulichthys spp.*) have a very large dorsal fin that is erected when they display toward rivals or potential mates. They do fairly well in reef aquariums if they are fed frequently and not housed with overly-bellicose tankmates.

Another popular Anthinne is the sole member of the genus *Serranocirrhitus* *Serranocirrhitus*. This fish, known as the Fathead, Sunburst or Hawkfish Anthias (*Serranocirrhitus latus*), is a lovely species that tends to occur under ledges or in caves. Unlike some of the shoal-forming species, the Fathead Anthias tends to occur in pairs or trios. It does well in the home aquarium if the specimen obtained has not been injured during the collection process (the swim bladder is sometimes damaged during the decompression process).

There are several deepwater anthias that may be represented in the aquarium trade. When these species are available, they command a hefty price because there is much work and danger associated with collecting fish at the depths at which they occur (i.e., typically deeper than 200 feet of water). The lovely Blotchy Deep Anthias (*Holanthias borbonius*) is one such member of the deepwater Anthinne guild. It has become more readily available to hobbyists of late. It is a hardy aquarium species, but be aware that while juveniles are usually quite congenial, adults will quarrel with one another. While not limited in distribution to deepwater, the Cherry Blossom Basslet (*Sacura margaritacea*) is limited in its range to southern Japan and Korea. This fish lives at a wide range of water temperatures (from 55 to 80 degrees Fahrenheit), but does best when housed at 78 degrees Fahrenheit or less.

Finally, there is the genus *Plectranthias* (commonly referred to as

TOP 10 ANTHIAS FOR THE HOME AQUARIUM

Bartlett's Anthias	*Pseudanthias bartlettorum*
Bicolor Anthias	*Pseudanthias bicolor*
Cooper's Anthias	*Pseudanthias cooperi*
Hutomo's Anthias	*Pseudanthias hutomoi*
Threadfin Anthias	*Nemanthias carberryi*
Stocky Anthias	*Pseudanthias hypselosoma*
Diadem Anthias	*Pseudanthias parvirostris*
Squareback Anthias	*Pseudanthias pleurotaenia*
Redbar Anthias	*Pseudanthias rubrizonatus*
Lyretail Anthias	*Pseudanthias squamipinnis*

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perchlets).
The members of this unusual genus look more like hawkfishes than their anthias kin. They spend most of their time resting on their large pectoral fins. They are very small fishes that typically lurk under ledges, among coral rubble, or in reef crevices. The only species that regularly enters the marine fish trade is the Unarmed Perchlet (*Plectranthias inermis*). While the perchlets are truly the "black sheep" of the subfamily, they make wonderful additions to the reef aquarium (including the nano-reef).

Part 1 What is an Anthias? | Part 2 Anthias Shoals in the Aquarium | Part 3 Feeding | Part 4 Aquarium Conditions & Tankmates | Part 5 Other Aquarium Anthias

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Scott W. Michael is an internationally-recognized writer, underwater photographer, and marine biology researcher specializing in reef fishes, and was the Banquet Speaker at our 2007 and 2008 Coral Conference and Frag Swap. He is a regular contributor to Aquarium Fish Magazine, Freshwater and Marine Aquarium Magazine, SeaScope, and is the author of Reef Fishes Vol 1, Vol 2, Vol 3, Vol 4, and Vol 5., A Pocket Expert Guide Marine Fishes, A Pocket Expert Guide to Reef Aquarium Fishes, 101 Best Saltwater Fishes: How to Choose and Keep Hardy, Brilliant, Fascinating Species That Will Thrive in Your Home Aquarium, Reef Sharks & Rays of the World, and Aquarium Sharks & Rays. Having studied marine biology at the University of Nebraska, Scott has served as a scientific consultant for National Geographic Explorer, the Discovery Channel, and French educational television.

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