

WELCOME TO OUR



ANGFA

Australia New Guinea Fishes Association

NATIONAL CONVENTION 2026



Murray River near Yarrawonga, Vic. Photo: Greg Martin

Cover Photograph

Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon *Mogurnda adspersa* Photo by John Lenagan



Once widely distributed in the lower Murray basin and across far northern Victoria, the Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon was declared extinct in Victoria in the late 20th Century. In 2019 a small population was rediscovered near Kerang in northern Victoria sparking a rescue effort, subsequent broodstock collection and breeding program that would become the second most successful small-bodied native fish success story in recent years. Purple-spotted Gudgeon thrive in slow-flowing or completely still waters, such as

creeks, rivers, wetlands, and billabongs. They rely heavily on structural cover hanging out around aquatic weeds, fallen logs, rocks, and snags. Being benthic ambush predators, they sit motionless on the substrate until small fish, macroinvertebrates, aquatic insect larvae, worms, or tadpoles wander close enough to be snapped up. Victorian Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon are thought to survive in the presence of larger-bodied predatory fish by using available cover like Tangled Lignum to hide in. Grows to around 12cm in Victoria.



ANGFA Victoria organisers statement

WELCOME TO CONVENTION

Welcome one and all to Melbourne for the 2026 ANGFA National Convention, proudly hosted by ANGFA Victoria. We hope those visiting Victoria for the first time spend some of that time enjoying what this fabulous part of the country has to offer. Victoria has hosted numerous ANGFA Conventions, the most recent being 2013 and 2019.

ANGFA's most recent convention, in 2024, was held in Cairns and was only the second time that an ANGFA Convention had been hosted in northern Queensland, the last one being Townsville in the early 90's. You would be amazed at how much planning and work goes into organising a successful convention with a committee based (in a large part) in another state/s. A big thank-you to all on the previous Convention Committee on an amazing job.

Having our 2026 convention in Victoria is an opportunity to showcase some of the work ANGFA Victoria has been doing with Fishes Conservation over the last decade or so, and you'll hear more about it over the next couple of days.

At this particular convention we are lucky to have a variety of presenters who will give you much detail about conservation efforts in the state, as well as plenty of presenters who will give more general aquarium hobby content.

Finally, vale Neil Armstrong, one of the key founding members of ANGFA and well-deserved ANGFA Life Member. Neil (known by his friends as "The Bhagwan" or "Silver Budgie") was a prominent native fish photographer/enthusiast, often going 'head to head' in friendly rivalry with

Gunther Schmida, arguing the merits of Canon vs Nikon (respectively). Neil developed an enormous catalogue of fish images over the decades, seamlessly transitioning from film to digital photography along the way. Many people brought fish (and other aquatic) subjects to Neil to be photographed and his images have been included in numerous books including Allen, Midgley & Allen's Field Guide to the Freshwater Fishes of Australia. Neil wrote

30 authored articles located in Fishes of Sahul, the ANGFA Bulletin and the Qld Newsletter. Furthermore he has 158 individual photo credits across Fishes of Sahul and Instream alone. Fittingly, Neil's rainbowfish photos illustrate the first ever issue of Fishes of Sahul (Vol. 1(1), July 1983). Neil's contribution to bringing rainbowfish awareness to the world through his beautiful images cannot be underestimated, and he will be missed.

INTRODUCTION TO ANGFA

The Australia New Guinea Fishes Association was started in early 1983, over 43 years ago. Since that time, ANGFA has brought together people with common interests in understanding more about the freshwater fishes and aquatic habitats of Australia and New Guinea - the ancient continent of Sahul. ANGFA's objectives are to promote the study, conservation and culture of the native freshwater fish species of Australia and New Guinea, and to provide a forum for the exchange of information.

ANGFA members include people from diverse backgrounds and experiences, people with a curiosity about what's in

their local creek or lake, aquarists with a keen interest to maintain and culture fish, government agencies, non government organisations, volunteer conservation groups, through to university scientists. All share a common love of our native fish and the aquatic ecosystems that maintain them.

CONVENTION ORGANISERS

The ANGFA National Convention 2026 has been brought to you by the Convention Planning Committee, hosted by ANGFA Victoria with the assistance of ANGFA National. The Convention 2026 Planning Committee consists of Graeme Finsen, Greg Martin, Sunny Syme, Glenn Briggs, Rod Wubben, Chris Lamin, Peter Gauci, Sarah Butler, Matt McGee, Peter Unmack and Leo O'Reilly.

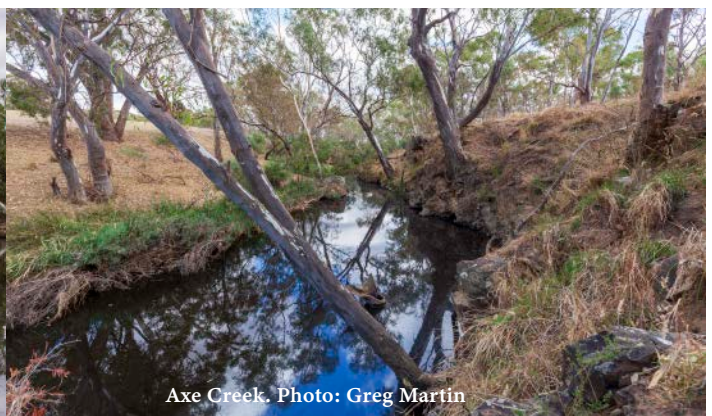
Thanks to Chris Lamin, Mark Toohey and the Convention Planning Committee for the Field Trip planning and organising. Special thanks needs to be given to Greg Martin for the production of this year's Convention eBooklet, and to Greg Wallis for designing the original Convention eBooklet template.

The support of this event by the various ANGFA groups and their committees, our sponsors and all attending delegates deserves a special mention, for this is what makes a great ANGFA convention. Thank you also to Gareth Fry of Best Western Airport Motel & Convention Centre, Attwood for his assistance and organisation of Convention 2026.

The members of ANGFA Victoria hope you enjoy the convention weekend and look forward to seeing you again in the future.



Kerang Weir Pool. Photo: Greg Martin



Axe Creek. Photo: Greg Martin

CONVENTION SPONSORS



Convention Program

Friday 16th October 2026

18:00 AGM

Saturday 17th October 2026

08:30 Registration

09:30 Opening by ANGFA Vic President

09:45 **Chris Lamin** - The trials and tribulations of running a conservation hatchery.

10:30 Morning Tea

11:00 **Blake Wall** - Keeping your hobby social - a How To guide.

11:45 Pre-lunch drinks

12:00 Lunch

13:00 **Glenn Briggs** - IRG reflections, visits to German aquarists and Aquarium Glaser.

Bill Buhagier - Keeping and breeding rainbowfish with exotic species such as cichlids.

13:45 **Stephen Mueller** - Blackfish successes and failures.

14:30 Afternoon Tea

15:30 **Brett Ingram** - From Cod to Galaxias - spawning threatened fish in captivity.

16:15 Trade Tables

17:00 Pre-dinner drinks

18:00 Dinner

Sunday 18th October 2026

08:30 Registration

09:00 **Shokoofeh Shamsi** - Do Australia's native fishes ever swim alone?

09:45 **Peter Rose** - Bringing back The Magnificent Six across the tri-state.

10:30 Morning Tea

11:00 **Cory McElroy** - How to get the most fun and enjoyment from your aquarium hobby.

11:45 Pre-lunch drinks

12:00 Lunch

13:00 **Peter Unmack** - Burdekin Rainbows and Creek Loss in Northern Victoria.

13:45 **Karl Moy** - Malanda Rainbowfish hybridisation and Gambusia disease at Edgbaston Station

14:30 Afternoon Tea

15:30 **Adam Kerezsy** - Olive Perchlet in the Southern Murray Darling Basin (Management or lack thereof?)

16:15 Closing by ANGFA Vic President

17:00 Clean up

Field trip to the Bendigo area on Monday 19th October

For our post-convention field trip we will head to Bendigo in Central Victoria to have a look at some of the successful conservation projects that ANGFA Victoria has been involved in over the last nine years. Activities will include visiting several 'surrogate dam' sites in Bendigo, having lunch by the Botanic Gardens, dropping in to see the native fish aquarium in Bendigo Library and then visiting several creeks on the way home to Melbourne.

If you are interested in joining us on the field trip, you must register your interest during registration on Saturday morning so we can organise car-pooling sufficient for the numbers attending the trip.



Ranger and habitat builder Mark Toohey will show us the sites around Bendigo. Photo: Greg Martin



Founded in 1933, The Aquarium Society of Victoria meets in their club rooms at 29 Grant Street Clifton Hill on the last Friday of the Month. They always have an excellent speaker on the night and trade tables featuring fish, plants, and all aquarium related goodies.

The Aquarium Society of Victoria also has regular Fish Fairs: an indoor "car boot sale", with vendors selling direct from tables in the hall. Vendors sell all Aquarium related products from fish and plants to tanks, fish food, filters, lighting and other miscellaneous aquarium equipment.

A S of V also has a Shrimp Keepers club.

<https://www.asov.com.au/home>

ANGFA National

COMMITTEE AND REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

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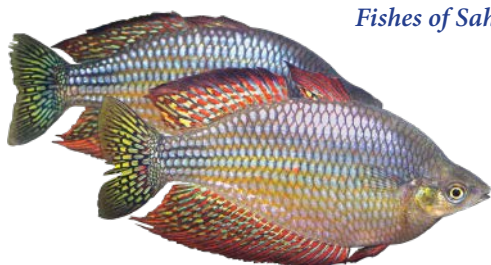
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Fishes of Sahul is produced by the Publications Committee



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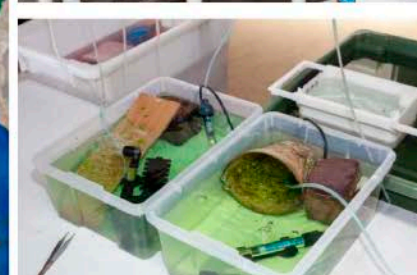


aquariumindustries.com.au



The trials and tribulations of running a conservation hatchery

Chris manages Middle Creek Farm, a conservation hatchery located near Briagolong, Victoria, specialising in the captive breeding and release of threatened and critically endangered small-bodied native fish. Middle Creek Farm's journey began nearly 15 years ago; when exploring her new property, a small native fish was found in the drying creek, this sparked a passion for not only the locally threatened Flinders Pygmy Perch, but all of our wonderful small-bodied native fish. There are currently ten small-bodied natives in the captive breeding program at Middle Creek Farm. Chris' talk will focus on the collection and breeding of threatened fish, the trials and tribulations, and how these conservation captive breeding programs have led to many of them now being available for the aquarium hobby.



Blake Wall (from Blake's Aquatics)

Keeping your hobby social - a how to guide



Blake is a passionate freshwater fishkeeper and the creative force behind the popular YouTube channel, Blake's Aquatics. Blake has built a dedicated community by sharing a transparent and engaging look into the world of ornamental fish, specialising in care, breeding, and species-specific insights. What began as a hobby has evolved into a comprehensive digital resource for hobbyists worldwide. Blake focuses on making aquariums accessible and actionable. His content is recognised for its authentic approach. With a background in engineering and a commitment to simplifying fish care and breeding, Blake brings a unique perspective and readily shares all of his processes for keeping and breeding fish to help anyone engage in the hobby. He advocates for simplifying fishkeeping practices and ensuring the health and wellbeing of all aquatic life.



Podcast

The Blake's Aquatics Podcast

Blakes Aquatics

IRG Conference reflections, visits to German aquarists and Aquarium Glaser



Like many people, Glenn started his fishkeeping at a young age with a few Goldfish in a small aquarium. In 1975 Glenn started keeping tropical fish while living at Redcliffe in Queensland, and really got the fishkeeping bug after collecting some local native fishes. Since then, Glenn's favourite species have always been Australian and New Guinea fishes. Glenn also keeps and breeds various exotics such as Cichlids, killifish and Characins. Glenn joined ANGFA (Australia New Guinea Fishes Association) when it was formed in 1983 and is an honorary life member of ANGFA. After 13 years in the banking sector, Glenn worked in the wholesale ornamental fish sector for 20+ years for Australia's two largest ornamental fish importers (Aquarium Industries and Bayfish). Now retired, Glenn is still active in ANGFA and the aquarium hobby, with about 50 aquariums and some garden ponds at his home in the Yarra Valley.

IRG trip 2026

In June this year, Glenn travelled to Germany as a guest speaker at the IRG convention at Russelsheim, Germany. The IRG (Internationale Gesellschaft für Regenbogenfische / International Rainbowfish Association) is a very successful aquarium association primarily focused on rainbowfishes and blue-eyes. Glenn will share some memories of his trip to Germany, including observations of the IRG event, and observations made during visits to several leading aquarium fish exporters in Germany and Singapore.



Bill Buhagier

Keeping and breeding rainbowfish with exotic species such as cichlids



Bill started keeping fish around the age of 5 when he was given a 2' tank for his room

As a child he was always obsessed with fish and going to Aquarium shops, and any body of water that carried fish. As a teenager Bill started filling his parent's garage with tanks, and began breeding and selling a few fish like zebra danio, white clouds, and some smaller gourami's. Once he'd moved out of home and was renting, he had a bedroom full of tanks where he was breeding corydora types and kilifish.

He got his first house and built a first fish room at the age of 23. At this stage Bill started attending Angfa meetings and was introduced to Australia's

native fish. He also became interested in African cichlids, particularly from Lake Tanganyika around this point. Bill's now on his third fish room and runs around 150-170 tanks. He doesn't keep any display tanks but mainly focuses on breeding and sustaining hard to get species. He has kept and bred a large number of Australian and Papua New Guinea fish, around 100 types of Tanganyikan fish, and bred many other types of fish, totalling to about 300-400 species. Bill has been lucky enough to travel to a few areas where his fish come from, with his favourite being Lake Tanganyika. Whenever he travels, he always tries to fit in something to do with fish or fishing.

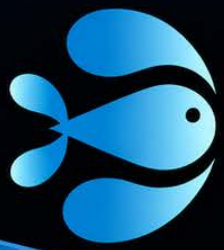


Stephen Mueller

Blackfish - Successes and failures

Stephen has been attempting to breed River Blackfish on his property in South West Victoria for 19 yrs. Known for his enduring determination and never give up attitude, Stephen successfully bred, grew out and released 16 healthy adult River Blackfish into a Cooriemungle dam in 2023. Stephen holds certificates in Painting and Decorating (1970, s) Floor Finishing and Covering (1980, s). He joined the Victorian Recreational Fishing Peak Body in 1996 and studied Aquaculture under John Mosig in 1997. In 1998 Stephen completed the National Maritime Operations Certificate, Coxswain. Stephen is passionate about River Blackfish and believes each one has its own unique personality. When not collecting fish food he enjoys crosswords, woodwork and contributing to his Face Book page, Blackfish Action Members.





Middle Creek *Aquaculture*



Middle Creek Conservation Hatchery

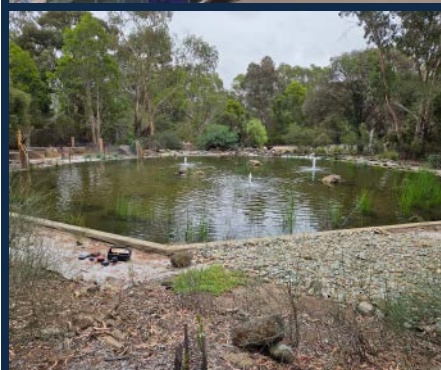
Middle Creek Conservation Hatchery (officially operating as Middle Creek Farm) is a specialised private aquaculture facility located in Stratford (near Briarolong) in Gippsland, Victoria. Managed by expert breeder Chris Lamin, the hatchery plays a critical role in saving some of Australia's most vulnerable small-bodied native fishes by focusing on the captive breeding and wild release of threatened and critically endangered species.

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Greg Martin 0407 094 313

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Senior Corrosion, Coatings & Materials Technologist

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MRACI Chartered Chemist, MAIM, Corrosion Technologist (ACA Cert.), MNACE

Brett Ingram

From Cod to Galaxias - spawning threatened fish in captivity



Dr. Brett Ingram serves as a Senior Scientist at the Victorian Fisheries Authority and is an Adjunct Associate Professor at Deakin University. With more than 40 years of experience, he is recognized for his research in the fields of fisheries and aquaculture, both in Australia and internationally. His expertise covers a wide spectrum of fisheries science. He has made significant contributions in breeding and rearing techniques for finfish and shellfish, culture system development, genetics, nutrition, water quality, aquatic ecology, environmental management, and health and biosecurity. His work also extends to fishery stock assessment and fish conservation. One of Brett's most notable achievements is his pioneering work on developing and refining captive breeding techniques for over 25 species, especially freshwater native fish including cods, perch, blackfish, catfish and galaxias. This work is supporting the recovery of endangered fish populations and ensuring the sustainability of recreational fisheries.

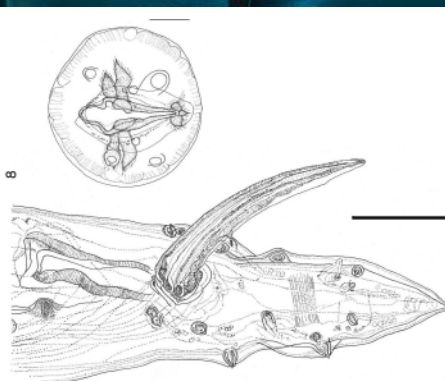
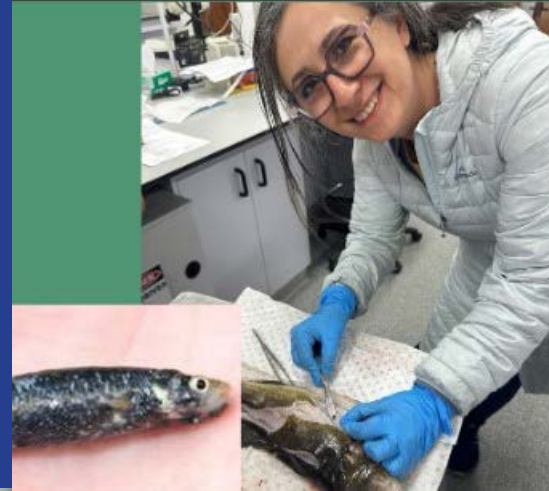


Shokoofeh Shamsi

Do Australia's native fishes ever swim alone?

Professor Shokoofeh Shamsi is a biologist and veterinary parasitologist who is fascinated by relationships in nature, especially the complex, surprising, and sometimes rather dramatic relationships between fish and the parasites that live in or on them. Shokoofeh came to Australia in 2002 and, after joining Charles Sturt University in 2010, began working extensively on Australian freshwater fish and their parasites, among other areas of parasitology. She finds this field endlessly fascinating because every fish-parasite relationship tells a story, about ecology, evolution, environmental

change, animal health, food safety, and the connections between aquatic life and the wider world. These tiny organisms can also reveal much bigger stories about biosecurity, from the farm level through to national borders. Shokoofeh is passionate about making parasitology accessible and engaging. She enjoys showing people that parasites, although small, unpopular, and rarely welcome guests, are incredibly important storytellers in biology, offering clues about the health of fish, waterways, ecosystems, and the world we share.



Peter Rose

Bringing back The Magnificent Six across the tri-state



Dr Peter Rose is freshwater ecologist and Project Manager for North Central CMA's Native Fish Recovery Plan - Gunbower and lower Loddon. Over the past 11 years, Peter has managed riparian restoration, wetland enhancement, fishway design

and construction, fish screen, and instream woody habitat reinstatement projects in Northern Victoria. Peter has a strong interest in the conservation and management of threatened floodplain specialist fish in the southern Murray-

Darling Basin and has recently worked on large-scale collaborative projects to recover Southern Pygmy Perch and Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon populations.



Cory McElroy

How to get the most fun and enjoyment from your aquarium hobby



Cory McElroy has been passionate about the freshwater aquarium hobby since he first saw a friend's display tank back in the early 2000's. After years of working and managing a fish store in his area, Cory decided to go out on his own and established Aquarium Co-Op in 2012. His focus from the very beginning was to better the aquarium hobby, and he set out to do this by supporting local breeders, providing high quality fish and plants to his customers, and focusing on educating newer fish keepers. He soon took to social media to continue

educating others by creating videos on YouTube, sharing his passion for the hobby while explaining things in an easy-to-understand style that resonated with millions of viewers. During this time, Cory focused on growing the business by adding online sales and developing or improving upon products that he felt the market needed. While Aquarium Co-Op has grown significantly over the past several years, Cory always stayed rooted in his passion for fish keeping and educating and entertaining others.



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Peter Unmack

Burdekin Rainbows and Creek Loss in Northern Victoria



Peter's fascination with fishes began with the purchase of his first fish tank when he was 7 years old. He soon obtained additional aquariums until he filled the two sheds in his parents backyard with fish tanks. Since 1985, Peter has kept a large range of Australian native freshwater fishes, most of which he collected from various travels. Peter has collected fishes extensively throughout much of mainland Australia as well as other parts of the world including Papua New Guinea, North America and southern South America. Peter was fortunate to be able to turn his fish hobby into an academic career. His interests include just about anything to do with freshwater fishes, but especially fish biogeography, conservation and desert springs.

He changed hemispheres in 1994: moved to California, then onto Arizona State University to complete his doctoral degree on the biogeography of Australian freshwater fishes. He went on to do research at Brigham Young University in Utah on the biogeography of southern South America and western North America fishes, followed by another project at the National Evolutionary Synthesis Centre in North Carolina working on developing GIS models to predict biogeographic patterns in freshwater organisms. Peter moved back to his homeland Australia in 2013 and worked at the University of Canberra until 2021 working on fish conservation projects, which include rainbowfish conservation, trying to decipher hemi-clonal unisexual carp gudgeons and examining biogeographic patterns in Australian fishes. Peter now runs his consultancy business Unmack AquaEvolutionary continuing his fishy research. His web pages are at <http://www.peter.unmack.net/>

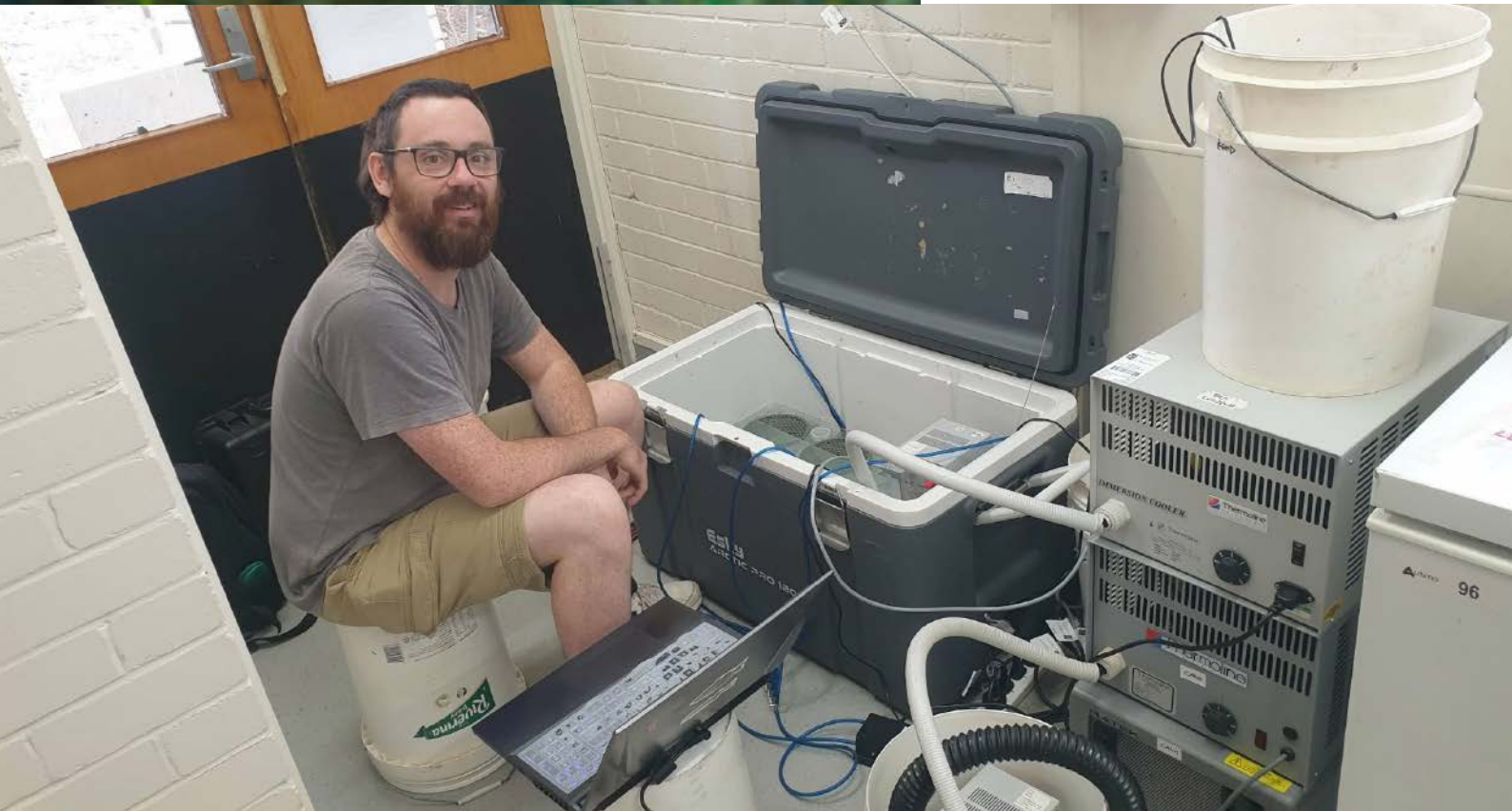


Malanda Rainbowfish hybridisation and Gambusia disease at Edgbaston Station



Photo: Keith Martin

Currently a PhD candidate at the University of Canberra investigating the factors influencing outcomes of secondary contact between rainbowfish. Karl is passionate about native freshwater fishes and their conservation and previously worked on the conservation of the Malanda and Running River rainbowfishes. He has always been a huge fan of Australia's smaller native freshwater fishes with hardyheads being a clear favourite. Karl is looking forward to finishing my PhD and once again lending his skills to them.



Adam Kerezsy

Olive Perchlet in the Southern Murray Darling Basin (Management or Lack Thereof)

Adam Kerezsy (Dr Fish Contracting) is a fish biologist who has worked in the rivers and springs of inland Australia for over 30 years. He completed a PhD at Griffith University and then worked on the conservation of the critically endangered red-finned blue-eye at Edgbaston in central-western Queensland before returning home to Lake Cargelligo (in central-western New South Wales) in 2015. Adam is the author of a large number of scientific publications and reports, as well as the natural history book *Desert Fishing Lessons: Adventures in Australia's Rivers*, which received a certificate of commendation at the Whitley Awards in 2012. Adam is currently working on a range of projects in both the Lachlan catchment in the southern Murray-Darling Basin and further north in the Paroo and Bulloo rivers in western Queensland.



Olive Perchlet. Photo: Greg Martin

Photo: Stuart Cohen



Conservation in action

Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon and Southern Pygmy Perch conservation releases



The Convention Planning Committee hopes you
learned hearing from experts in their fields
laughed while catching up with old friends
exchanged knowledge about fish-keeping and conservation
shared stories with new friends
got some treasures at the trading tables
indulged in the convention dinner
got your feet and dipnets wet on a field trip
and enjoyed the 2026 ANGFA National Convention

ANGFA