

3rd International Conference on

Aquaculture & Fisheries

September 29-October 01, 2016 London, UK



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Zebra Fish: A biological model organism

In 1822, when the Briton Francis Hamilton first described a certain small, longitudinally-banded fish as *Cyprinus rerio* (today *Danio rerio*), from the Kosi River in India and assigned it as so-called *Danio*-division (named after the Bengalese name Dhani), he can have had no idea of the popularity this little cyprinid would eventually achieve. It was first imported for the aquarium hobby in 1905, and christened “zebra *danio*”, the name it still bears today. In universities and research laboratories it was established in the early 1980s, as “Zebra Fish”, and became a model organism for studies of vertebrate development, developmental biology, and some human genetic diseases, after Streisinger’s pioneer work at the University of Oregon, with wild fishes collected by Bleher in Assam. With the result those 15 years before Dolly the Scottish sheep achieved fame; Zebra Fish had been cloned at this University, being the first vertebrate cloned in history. Today, over 5,000 researchers in 450 labs throughout 30 plus countries study Zebra Fish. The author will not only talk about recent successes with this 3-5 cm long fish, but also about other tiny fish species with amazing scientific under estimated results in seeking solutions to diseases which affect humans.

Biography

Heiko Bleher is owner of Aquapress Publishers, Italy (Formerly Aquarint Verlags Haus, Germany), with yearly publication of a popular magazine called DISCUS-BOOK, with the updates of the Amazon region (and-updates on the monographs by Heiko Bleher: Bleher's Discus volume 1 and volume); the quarterly peer-reviewed scientific journal aqua, International Journal of Ichthyology; writing and publishing a series of book on aquatic environments (past and present) worldwide, its fishes and invertebrates, the biodiversity in general, the environment and habitat loses, as well as the endless pollution of rivers and lakes.

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