

Breeding Haplochromis “Sp. 44”

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One of the most beautiful species in Lake Victoria. I decided to start keeping Haplochromis “Sp.44” I had originally purchased a small trio but it quickly turned into a pair as one of the females didn’t make it. When I had brought them home I had put them in my 35 gallon tank as they were only about an inch in size and didn’t want them getting eaten as the little male was already starting to show colour and was just amazing.



After about a month or two I had done some rearranging in one of my 125 gallon tanks measuring 72”x18”x24”and decided to move them in there were the water parameters are 7.8 ph and a hardness of 483.3.

There were mouthfuls along the way but I just didn’t bother with a female that was so small and so young. Once she reached her adult size of around 3” I began paying attention to getting her to breed by using the recommended dose of Rift Lake Cichlid salt by Seachem. I would feed the tank a diet of spirulina flake and frozen plankton along with some staple flake. Once the female would begin to “square off” in the mid section I would perform a 40% water change on the tank and within a day or two they were breeding. If you have never seen a Sp. 44 male courting you have no idea what you’re missing. We refer to him as a little Indian Chief as the colours he displays are as gorgeous as an Indian Chief’s head dress.

Once the spawn has ended the male will continue courting and showing off for a couple more days. The female then retreats under a clump of stacked round rocks to rear her fry at times she simulates eating and on the odd occasion I have witnessed her in taking small particles of food while carrying her brood. She is simply a remarkable mother.



Fourteen days after the spawning has occurred I remove her from the tank and place her into a Tupperware container where I assist her in releasing her fry. She is immediately placed back into her original tank. Her brood size varies from 20 to 40 and these are some of the more slow growing fry I have experienced raising. The fry are fed brine shrimp, growth formula pellet and crushed staple flake. At about 1” the males begin displaying their beautiful colour and as mentioned earlier will begin to spawn.



Haplochromis “Sp.44” are and always will be one of my favourite Victorians. So the next time you are looking for that magnificent fish to add to your aquarium don’t forget about these Victorian Beauties.