

Species Profile: *Aulonocara stuartgranti* Maulana

Aulonocara stuartgranti Maulana is a beautiful peacock with a blue body and a band of yellow that runs behind the head and into the pectoral fins. There is also some yellow mixed into the tail as well. The dorsal, anal, and pectoral fins all have a white edge to them. This is one of my favorite peacocks. It also goes by the name of Bi-Color 500. The Bi-Color part is obviously because of the dominant blue and yellow in the fish. The 500 comes from the fact that it was item number 500 on Stuart Grant's African Diving LTD price list.

It is no surprise that this fish is a mouth brooder. I have found it to be one of the most peaceful of peacocks in my experience. I have kept it with *Protomelas*, *Placidochromis*, *Otopharynx*, and other *Aulonocara* with absolutely no problems at all. It spends most of its time close to the sand and sifts often through the sand. In the wild it is a micro predator and I am pretty sure that is where this behavior comes from. I feed New Life Spectrum as the staple food. I also use Omega One African Cichlid Flakes and frozen brine, mysis, krill, and plankton.

I had my male and female in a 55 gallon with various other fish including a male *Aulonocara Rubescens*. I noticed that both males seemed very interested in her, which is not surprising as peacocks are notorious cross breeders. I decided to separate the Maulana pair from the tank and into a 20 long that I had empty. I did this and kind of left them alone for a while. I put a few rocks in the tank for her sake but I am not sure if it was totally necessary as he has never been hard on his fe-



male at all. I peeked in a couple of days later and noticed that she was holding. I pulled the male out and returned him to the main tank. He seemed to have a bit of an extra strut in his step.. I threw some food in with the female occasionally but she never gave it a second look, so I decided to let it run its course and left the tank alone. Once in awhile I would turn on the light just to make sure she was still holding. About 3 ½ weeks later I noticed a couple fry swimming around and was kind of disappointed. I was thinking is that it????? A couple of days later she released the rest and totaled 19 fry. One died pretty quick and 3 days later I am at 18 and holding strong.

I have always loved peacocks and have kept quite a few, but this is the first brood I have actually ever kept successfully. Normally I would stress the female out trying to catch her after she was holding and moving her. Other times I had no room and would let the release happen in the main tank and let nature happen.

This is a great fish that I think everyone should have the pleasure of keeping.

— by Dave Hansen

