

## Species Profile: *Aulonocara stuartgranti* "Ngara Flametail"

*Aulonocara stuartgranti* "Ngara Flametail" or Ngara Flametail, is a maternal mouthbrooder native to lake Malawi in and around the areas of Ngara and also Mdoka. The climate is temperatures in the mid 70's to 80's and native waters for this fish are pH of 8.0. I obtained 4 2 inch long fish from Armke's . Males achieve a size of 6 inches but mine are still young and just starting to color up with blue showing up in the dorsal fin and tail. Females achieve a size of 5 inches and are dark in color almost black with black stripes.

The fish bred in a 55 gallon tank which contained Pool Filter Sand. The tank was filtered by a Emperor 400 and Eheim 2025 and had a pH of 8.1. I performed weekly water changes equal to 25% of the tank volume. I used fluorescent lighting for a duration of 14 hours each day. I fed the fish New Life Spectrum, Dainichi, Frozen Brine Shrimp, Frozen Mysis Shrimp.

They didn't really color up yet for this first spawn. I unfortunately didn't observe the actual spawn. The pair laid approximately 8 eggs. After spawning, the female retreated to a hiding place to avoid harassment by the male. I stripped the mother and tumbled the eggs. Approximately 3 eggs representing 37.5 of the total hatch were viable and hatched after 5 days. The eggs were a dark yellow when stripped but the bad ones then turned milky white. The fry when hatched were a clear tanish in color.

The only special care I gave the fry was to place them in a breeder box until big enough to go into a 10 gallon to grow out. The tank used Aquaclear Mini with a sponge pre-filter on it for filtration. I didn't give the parents a chance to care for the fry. I started the fry off on Cyclop-Eeze. After seven days I started feeding crushed NLS. The fry grew slowly.

This is a pretty typical Peacock with the only difference I know of being that it is SUPER slow in getting its adult colors. I would recommend this fish to others as when it gets its adult coloration it is truly a beautiful fish and easy to care for.

I hope to breed this fish again however I think I am going to have to give it a different tank to do so in.

— by *Ryan Robinson*