

## Species Profile: Harpagochromis sp. Golden Duck

Harpagochromis sp. Golden Duck or Golden Duck, is a maternal mouthbrooder native to Lake Victoria. The climate is sub-tropical with temperatures in the mid 70's to 80's and native have a pH of 7.8. I obtained 5 males and 2 females about 4-5" long fish from GCCA members who ordered them from Old World Exotics . Males achieve a size of 5 inches and are solid black with bright orange egg spots in breeding dress and very golden otherwise. A dominant male is quite the site to see! Females achieve a size of 4 inches and are solid gold with a black horizontal stripe. At times can have vertical stripes as well, especially when stressed and younger.



Photo By James Gibbons

The fish bred in a 55 gallon tank which contained natural medium gravel and was planted with artificial plants . The tank was filtered by a Hydro sponge filter size V. The tank had a constant pH of pH of 7.8 and temperature of 78 degrees. I performed weekly water changes equal to 50% of the tank volume. I used fluorescent lighting for a duration of approx. 14 hours each day. I fed the fish Kensfish flake with occasional spirulina and small feeder fish (mainly deformed fry from various species).

Males are solid black with orange egg spots. Females seem to shine a brighter golden color. These fish spawn in the typical African cichlid fashion.

The pair laid approximately 45 tan eggs. This spawning took place several months after acquiring the fish and was extremely rewarding as hundreds of this rare species have been spawned and spread throughout the hobby. After spawning, the male continued to harass tankmates much more than the holding female. She held for 14 days be-

fore I carefully stripped the fry. The fry were dark in color and about 3/8 of an inch long, free swimming with egg sacks almost gone.

The fry were placed in a 10 gallon bare bottom tank to ease in cleaning and water changes. The tank used hydro sponge filter size I for filtration and they were fed crushed flake 2-3 times a day with a small daily water change. It seemed the fry grew somewhat slow, possibly because of the size of the tank.

Equal sized males seemed as if they would fight to the death. I did not let it get very far but assumed it by the way they were acting only hours after introducing them to their 55 gallon tank. 3 of the 5 males were promptly removed to a 90 gallon show tank and only fought occasionally without the presence of females. Also noted, they were not the dominant fish in this show tank.

I recommend breeding of all Victorian cichlids, especially The ones such as these that don't have typical bright colors that seem to make fish popular. I believe they are less likely to be kept and bred for this reason and Victorian enthusiasts should take note to insure the survival of the species.

At first glance this fish looks very similar to a large-mouth bass. Smaller males seemed to be less likely to fight with the dominant male and sometimes brought out additional color without the all out war that is bound to happen with an identical size male.

— by James Gibbons