

## Species Profile: *Julidochromis regani* “Kipili”

*Julidochromis regani* is a cave brooder native to the shallow intermediate habitat of Lake Tanganyika. This species has a lake wide distribution and has been found from Bujumbura and Nyanza in Burundi, from Kigoma, Msalaba, and Kipili in Tanzania, from Kalemie in Zaire, and from Cameron Bay in Zambia. I obtained about twelve 2-3" fish from Hot Cichlids. Both male and female exhibit the same color pattern, yellow body with five black horizontal stripes and blue edging on the dorsal and tail fin. Males achieve a size of 10cm and the females are the larger of the two, achieving a size of 13cm.



Photo by Robert De Leon

The fish were placed in a 20 long to pair up naturally which didn't take long. As the fish paired up they were moved to either a 10 or 20 gallon species tank, which contained pool filter sand and several pieces of lace rock made to resemble a cave. The tanks are filtered by an air driven sponge filters and the tank temperature is 78-80 degrees with a ph of 8. I perform weekly water changes equal to 20-25% off the tank volume. I use fluorescent lighting for duration of 12-14 hours each day. The fish are fed HBH Krill pellets, Omega one cichlid flake and Dainichi Ultima.

When spawning the color of both fish intensifies. After a few days of courting by the female, which consisted of her shaking, the pair chose the cave I provided for them. The female entered and assumed an upside down position and began to place the eggs on the ceiling of the cave and then the male entered and assumed the same position to fertilize the eggs.

The pair laid approximately 15-20 greenish/gray eggs. About 10 days or so I saw several 1/8th inch long fry swimming close to the surface of the spawning

site. I started the fry on freshly hatched baby brine shrimp and Cyclop-eeze. After a week or so I added crushed flake to their diet. The fry have a color pattern similar to the parents.

With this particular species, fry can be left with the parents until they achieve a size of an inch or so. The parents will continue to breed and the larger fry will move to the outer perimeter of the spawning area and will provide security for their smaller siblings. Once you don't notice any smaller fry swimming around or the larger ones hanging near the surface it's time move them to a grow out tank.

While breeding *J.regani* wasn't too difficult

## Species Profile: *Julidochromis regani* “Kipili”

there are a couple of things I would have done differently. One is to add some type of dither fish that stays at the surface and not bother the parents or eat the fry. By adding them it will lessen the chance of the pair bond breaking down. The second thing is never use a bare bottom tank, one pair that I did place in one, did not bred until there was a thin layer of algae growing on the bottom. Despite this, I would recommend all hobbyists give one of several *Julidochromis* species a try. You will not be disappointed.

■ *Charles Skillern*