

Species Profile: Lamprologus ocellatus

I started out initially with 5 juveniles from David Pakela. After watching them for several weeks I started to see some size differences and determined which were males and which were females. In addition the fish behavior was used to aid in telling the differences. The male that I ended up with had claimed about a 6" radius of sand and all shells in that area as his own. The



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“I was surprised that this pair spawned so soon, especially since the female is so small “

ones I determined to be females tended to stay with one shell. I noticed a couple of the potential females had some minor defects. At this point Robert Deleon had a couple of females available and I bought them from him and culled everything else out. I had 1 male and 2 fe-

males left at this point, I hoped!

I had the setup as follows. A 20-gallon tank with some holey rock as a divider down the middle and about 25 shells. Of course I couldn't leave well enough alone and added some other fish to the mix, Julidochromis ornatus, but this did not work out very well and the Lamprologus ocellatus never were very comfortable in that situation. I removed the Julies and decided to go with a species only tank. I was doing water changes of about 20% on a weekly basis. I fed Brine shrimp flakes

in the morning and either frozen plankton, mysis, or brine in the afternoon. The fish continued to gain size and I figured I was still some time away from any spawns. Not long after this on about 5 Feb 04, I noticed one of the females would not leave the entrance to her shell, except to feed. She laid long ways across the shell and looked to be in a defensive position. I thought maybe some eggs had been laid and kept an eye out. On 19 Feb 04, I noticed 2 fry at the mouth of the shell and after periodic observations have seen up to 5 at one time. I am leaving them in the tank and feeding them Cyclop-eeze and baby brine shrimp. When feeding the parents their flake I crush a little bit for the fry. I have turned the filters down to their minimum flow rate during feedings just to make sure that food is reaching the bottom for the fry.

In addition, I believe the other female has laid some eggs also.

I hope this has been helpful.



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— by Dave Hansen

“I noticed one of the females would not leave the entrance to her shell... I [later] noticed 2 fry at the mouth of the shell “