

Species Profile: *Tropheus moorii* sp. Black "Ikola Kaiser"

Tropheus Moorii Sp. Black "Ikola Kaiser" or Ikola Kaiser *Tropheus* Bumble bee *Tropheus*, is a maternal mouthbrooder Colony native to the rocky Outcroppings



with intense geographic diversity. This variety the Kaiser I comes almost exclusively from the National Park off IKOLA Lake Tanganyika. The climate is sub-tropical with temperatures in the mid 70's to 80's and native waters for this fish are pH of 8.1-8.3. I obtained 10 1 1/4" long fish from Dutch Stock F1 from lakeside hatchery . Males achieve a size of 5" and are Equal thick bands of chrome yellow on a 1/3 black head and 1/3 black tail. Females achieve a size of 4 3/4" and are Same as male w/ slightly less thick yellow band.

The fish bred in a 55 gallon tank which contained Black coarse sand and was planted with N/A . The tank was filtered by a Penguin 330 bio-wheel and had a pH of pH of 7.8, temp of 80 F, added salt and Epsom salt in the amount of 1 TBS per 5 gallons water NET.. I performed weekly water changes equal to 50% of the tank volume. I used fluorescent lighting for a duration of 14 hours each day. I fed the fish Hikari Cichlid Excel spirulina algae flake and frozen peas.

About 1 hour after a water change all 4 females began to do an attack and shake dance in front of two fighting

males, when males got the idea the courtship chasing and dancing began. after about 2 hours of tank-wide Chaos, the biggest female and her court of smaller female began mouthing the gravel over one piece of slate. The males stopped fighting long enough to sniff the females anal area and then resumed the chasing. The female that eventually spawned took on a grayish hue to her gill area and her ovipositor descended. Males continued fighting up until spawning commenced. They nuzzled each other slowly spinning in circles over the slate until the first egg was laid. Male changed direction and female scooped the Big BB size



Photos By Jeff Johnson

egg up. The pair took several breaks laying 11 eggs total. Male swam with all fins erect during the spawning while subordinate male harassed but did not harm the other females in the tank. When spawning was complete the females yellow faded to a cream color and she went back to her usual behaviors, with a very noticeable bulge in her buccal cavity.

The pair laid approximately 11 eggs. Female held the eggs for 16 days where I "milked her" and raised the fry in a seasoned 10 gallon tank all 11 eggs hatched Female was returned directly to colony tank after she was stripped/milked, and accepted without much notice. She ate only a few minutes later. Approximately 11 eggs representing 100% of the total hatch were viable and hatched after stripped at 16 days 80F. fry are grey in color with small thin yellow pinstripes. Yolk sack was all absorbed.

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The fry didn't require any special care on my part. I left them in the 10 gallon tank The tank used 1 Hydro-sponge filter for filtration. Once the female released the fry, she did not exhibit any tendency to care for the fry. I started the fry off on crushed OSI spirulina flake and algae in 10 gallon.. After Right away I started feeding crushed flake food. The fry grew doubled size every 3 weeks.

First few spawns the females often swallow fry/eggs, but once they become successful the females spawn about 5 times a year each, one colony can produce a lot of fry quickly once they get going. Like all things *Tropheus* these guys are intense in their courtship and activities, what sets *Tropheus* apart from all other cichlids. Good *Tropheus* to breed because the fry are always in demand at LFS and online as well command a fairly high price at a small size.

One of my favorite varieties of my favorite species of *Tropheus*. Any person that sees the tank-o-*Tropheus* falls in love with them incredulous that they are not marine fishes. great pets too they line up to be caressed before feeding them their Hikari excel.



Photo By Jeff Johnson

— by *Jeff Johnson*