

# CELEBES HALFBEAK, NOMORHAMPHUS LIEMI



Pair of wild caught Celebes Halfbeaks. Male on left.

## DESCRIPTION

The Celebes Halfbeak is a very interesting livebearer that is not often seen in the hobby. They are surface feeders and have an upper jaw that is shorter than the turned down lower jaw, which allows them to feed on insects at the water surface. They are found in Southeast Asia in mountain streams of Indonesia and the Philippines. They prefer a roomy tank with soft to medium hard water that is shallow with lots of cover. They are excellent jumpers, so keep them covered. They are mostly quite peaceful, but males can get nasty with each other. They will eat flake food, but are carnivores and need meat protein to get them to breed. This includes worms, daphnia, brine shrimp, etc. Sometimes hand-feeding of frozen foods works best because they rarely eat food off the tank bottom. They can reach up to 4 inches, but males are smaller and more colorful with a shorter anal fin (gonopodium). There are currently 19 recognized species of *Nomorhamphus* with some being very colorful. Within *N. liemi* there is a variety of color variations. Clean oxygenated water and regular water changes are important for this species. A good temperature range is 75-80 degrees.

## BREEDING

The Celebes Halfbeak could be considered quite difficult to breed, mainly because they have a small number of fry (9-15) and are extremely efficient at consuming them! Prices on this species remain fairly high because they are not prolific. A large species tank with heavy plant cover and quick removal of any fry found is essential. The fry are born large,  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 inch long, and will easily take food (flake or live) on the surface. Females require fertilization for each batch of fry, and gestation is 6-8 weeks. Maturity for fry may take 6 months.

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