

YELLOW FIN CONGO TETRA, *Alestopetersius caulalis*

by Chase Klinesteker GVAC issue #9, 1997



Yellowfin Congo Tetra, reverse trio, Female above Photo by Darrell Ullisch

DESCRIPTION

The Yellow Fin Congo Tetra (*Alestopetersius caudalis*) is a beautiful but rarely seen fish from Zaire, Africa. It is an active, peaceful, somewhat timid, schooling fish that is a good addition to a community tank. They are 3 inches in size, although my pair is about 2 inches and growing extensions on the dorsal and middle of the tail fin. Highlights of brilliant white border the dorsal, anal, and ventral fins, giving the fish a delicate, flowing appearance. The tail has a dark border with areas of bright and more diffused yellow within it. The tail “spike” is a dark long extension starting at the base and extending far out from the center of the tail. The female is quite plain both in fins and color.

FEEDING

These fish will eat all foods, including flake, frozen, and live. I recommend some live foods to keep them in top condition. They are what I call “splash feeders” because when they grab a bite at the surface, they make a quick turn and dart down to safety. This can make a noise and even get you wet! Water conditions should be

clear and clean. Softer and slightly acid water is probably preferred, although these bred in alkaline (Ph 7.8) water of normal hardness.

BREEDING

I have not seen articles on their breeding, but they breed quite similarly to the Congo Tetra (*Phenacogrammus interruptus*). I was fortunate to get some eggs from a pair acquired several months ago. They were in a well planted 10 gallon tank with an undergravel filter and a few other tetras. I was making 50% water changes and heavy feedings to get them to spawn. One evening they were observed scattering eggs among the plants and I managed to collect about 50 eggs with a clear cylinder siphoning of the gravel surface. The eggs were clear, quite large, and slow sinking, which is similar to Congo Tetra eggs. The eggs were rinsed off and placed in rainwater with methylene blue under light aeration.

The eggs took 7-12 days to hatch. There was a large size difference in the fry because the hatching time was so spread out. The fertility rate was quite low, as only about 15 hatched, maybe because the eggs were not laid in soft, acid water. For the first 2 days they were fed on Liquifry egglayer food, then began taking newly hatched brine shrimp. Once on brine shrimp, they did quite well, although the size difference was a problem. The Yellow Fin Congo Tetra is a challenge to breed and somewhat delicate to keep, but it is a very beautiful and interesting addition to any tank. Hopefully, availability will improve in the future.