

DWARF FORKTAIL RAINBOWS, PSEUDOMUGIL FURCATUS



A young pair of Dwarf Yellow Forktail Rainbows

DESCRIPTION

The Forktail, or Dwarf Yellow Rainbow, is one of the most attractive of the dwarf blue-eyed rainbowfishes available. They are found in low altitude, heavily vegetated forest streams with slow to moderate current. Males have bright lemon-yellow edged fins and tail extensions that get longer as the fish matures. Older males will have wing-like pectoral fins that they use for a stunning display. Their iridescent blue eyes are beautiful. Females have blue eyes and some yellow on their fins, but generally less color and finnage than males, so it is easy to determine sex. They come from a relatively small region in Papua, New Guinea and are listed as a threatened species. Widely available in the hobby, all fish are descendants of an original collection, so they are susceptible to some inbreeding problems. They seem to do best in moderately hard water with PH between 7 and 8. Easy to breed, they only lay a few large eggs daily and are somewhat sensitive to water chemistry changes. Clean water, high oxygen, and good filtration are recommended. They reach up to 2 inches, have a lifespan of about 3 years, and take about 8 months to fully mature. They are a very peaceful, shoaling fish that will eat a variety of foods, but have fairly small mouths. Newly hatched brine shrimp is one of their favorite foods.

BREEDING

The Forktail Rainbow will lay a few large eggs daily in a nylon mop which are easy to see and pick for separate hatching at around 80 degrees. They are not prolific, so a group of 2 males and 3 or 4 females is best for breeding. Parents will eat their eggs and fry. The eggs can be placed in a hatching container of a quart or 2 and a drop of 5% methylene blue. A light bubbling of air keeps the water fresh, although the water will need to be changed on the eggs 2 or 3 times before hatching, which takes place in 14-21 days. Remove the newly hatched fry with an eyedropper and put in a rearing tank. They will take powdered dry food and newly

hatched brine shrimp right away. Growth is slow and I would recommend adding snails to the fry tank to help reduce pollution. These fish are slightly susceptible to velvet disease if conditions are not really clean. If velvet is seen on the fry or adults, it can be controlled by adding 2 teaspoons of salt per gallon. Good filtration should continue, and it will take a few days for things to adjust, but the velvet should go away, and regular water changes will gradually return it to normal.

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