

# UARU UPDATE



Mated pair of Uaru with eggs

My favorite fish is unquestionably the Triangle Cichlid, or Uaru amphiacanthoides. This is proven by the fact that I have 17 “3X5 Computer” cards of information collected on the species when most species have only 2 or 3. I bred and wrote a 3-page article on this fish in 1993, but have recently bred it again and discovered some new information. Because this fish is a definite challenge to breed, I thought I should share. For those serious about breeding it, the 1993 article is on my “Breeding Tropical Fish” website [www.chasesfishes.com](http://www.chasesfishes.com), in the “Article” section under “Cichlids”.

## PERSONALITY

Uaru remind me of Discus, slow and stately. Their mouths are even similar and they both feed their fry with body slime at first. Big and bug-eyed, they seem to have a definite personality and will eat food from your hand. In October of 2017, I purchased 6 2-3 inch Uaru at a SWAMAS auction. I paid about \$70. for them and thought that was high, but later found out on the Internet that they retail for around \$35. each, with adults going for around \$100. Sometimes, this “poor mans’ Discus” sells for more than discus because it is so infrequently bred.

## PAIR BONDING

As the 6 fish grew, I put 3 each in two 20-gallon tanks, as no larger tanks were available. When they reached 4-5 inches, they began to sex out, mainly shown by their behavior and treatment of the third fish in each 20-gallon tank. Males are slightly larger and may have slightly longer fins, but that is not predictable. I didn’t realize how strongly they pair-bond, as the third fish in both tanks was killed, and I ended up with 2 pairs.

Then one male killed his female and I had one breeding pair. Even after the mated pair laid several batches of eggs, the male started attacking the female, but I quickly removed the female to another tank to recover for a few weeks. This aggression was likely due to not having a large enough aquarium to accommodate all 6 Uaru. Reintroduction of the female brought more attacks by the male, so I waited until nighttime, threw in the female, and turned the lights out. The next morning the pair was doing fine and they soon started laying eggs again.

## **FEEDING**

Uaru are vegetarians. In 1993, my Uaru were in a 70 gallon tank with a healthy growth of water sprite for them to access. In a smaller tank, this was not possible and I decided to feed them mostly pellets. I selected Pond Chow that leans toward more vegetarian fish. Extra live plants from my other tanks, even if covered with algae, were eagerly devoured. First soaking the pellets in water for 5-10 minutes helped the fish consume them.

## **BREEDING**

The pair bred in a bare 20 gallon-long with an undergravel filter. Although the fish rearranged the gravel considerably, the filter still worked well for this messy-eating fish. They did not lay any eggs in or on the clay pot in the tank. To help clean up, I had a 4-5 inch woodcat in with the pair. As I intended to remove the eggs for hatching, the catfish threat seemed to help strengthen the pair-bond. The mated pair would lay only about 30-40 eggs at a time, but every 5-10 days. They were laid on the glass near the undergravel lift tube in the same spot. I would remove the eggs with a siphon-on-a-stick, which was savagely attacked by the pair. I strongly recommend that you do NOT put your hand in the tank at this time! Eggs left in with the parents did not result in any free-swimming fry, whether from the catfish or hard tapwater.

## **HATCHING AND RAISING**

This seems to be the biggest challenge in breeding this fish. This pair has probably spawned 20 times for me in the last several months, but the hatch rate has been poor or none. I now have around 30 fry from those spawnings. Most times I use fresh rainwater to hatch them in, but from our area it is slightly alkaline, and Uaru come from extremely soft and acid water. Lately I have been acidifying the rainwater and keeping it warmer (80+ degrees), and that may help. It seems that the eggs are very sensitive to any bacteria, so I now use both a sponge filter and bubbler for water circulation in the hatching container, which is about one gallon. Do water changes with clean rainwater. Once the eggs have hatched, the water must be kept very clean until they become free-swimming. Then I add snails and a few pieces of oak leaf. I believe the oak leaf may produce some slime that the fry can feed on for a couple of days before they take baby brine shrimp. The fry are kept in the hatching container and fed for 2-3 weeks before they are adjusted to tapwater and moved to a larger tank.

Chase Klinesteker, [ckspoonpl1@aol.com](mailto:ckspoonpl1@aol.com)