

## ***Ophthalmotilapia Boops***

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B.A.P. Class C Report



*Ophthalmotilapia Boops* “Neon Streak” originates from the Kipili in Lake Tanganyika. The male of the species is jet black with some light blue speckling and also bright yellow lappets on his ventral fins. Females and fry stay silver.

The tank I keep them in is a 40 gallon long, with the temperature set at 78° F, and two Hydro 5 sponge filters filtering it. A big mound of rocks keeps them all happy and gives them a spot to hide. When the male is ready to breed he does get a little more aggressive, but mainly just to protect his territory.

Come spawning time, the males spread their ventral fins wide from their body and thus display to the females the yellow colored lobes which are to be considered fake eggs. These egg dummies on the tips of the ventral fins serve to initiate spawning in females. *Ophthalmotilapia* are specialized mouthbrooders. During the spawning act the female immediately turns around after a batch of eggs is discharged and takes the eggs into the mouth before the male is able to fertilize them. As soon as the male presents the egg dummies, the female begins to snap after them. On doing so, it picks up the sperm released by the male which then fertilizes the eggs in the mouth of the mother specimen.

I will let the female hold the eggs in her mouth for about 8-12 days, at which time I will strip the eggs. When the female is ready I open her mouth and out come tons of little baby fry. I just use a Q-tip, but there are many other methods out there.