

### **BREEDING *CICHLASOMA SPILURUM***

by Andrew Boyd

Not a lot can be said about breeding the little Blue Convict that Dr Axelrod hasn't already noted in "Breeding Aquarium Fishes: Volume 3", but here are just a few personal observations.

Unlike the common Convict (*C. nigrofasciatum*), *C. spilurum* spawns more out in the open. Not quite "right out in the open" as per Axelrod, but our pair weren't too fussed about making themselves a cave. Spawning took place in a ceramic imitation hollow log, with only about 50 eggs resulting. This low number of eggs could be attributed to the young age of the pair, or to the fact that they were not fed extensively on live foods beforehand.

Unlike Dr Axelrod's description of the fish, it was our male that had a dark patch on the dorsal fin, not the female. It was however the male that guarded the eggs. Photographs accompanying the chapter (by the late Ruda Zukal) show the fish with the blotch on its dorsal fin guarding the eggs.

When our pair of White Convicts (a colour variety of the common Convict) spawn it is always the female that guards the eggs, watching over and fanning them, and picking out dead ones. But it is the male of *C. spilurum* that does all the work.

As in Axelrod's article, brine shrimp were readily accepted by our fry, as were small cyclops and daphnia. The fry grew quickly.

There is much to recommend the keeping of *C. spilurum*, with its generally peaceful demeanour and interesting 'cichlidish' behaviour. However, don't keep them with common Convicts, which will bully the *spilurums* at every chance they get. The two species will readily hybridise in captivity, with the resulting crossbreed being more aggressive than either parent.

2014 Editor's Note: The genus *Cichlasoma* is a moving feast, taxonomically speaking. The "Blue-eyed Cichlid" has been variously known as *Cichlasoma spilurum*, *Archocentrus spilurum* and *Herichthys spilurum* since this article was written. We'll leave it as *Cichlasoma* here because that's what fishkeepers call it.