

# THE ROSY CICHLID, *Panamius panamensis*

By Chase Klinesteker SWAM, Nov-Dec 2008



**Male Rosy Cichlid**

Cichlid nomenclature has been in turmoil the last several years. The Rosy Cichlid has been grouped in *Cichlasoma*, *Neotroplus*, *Theraps*, and *Cryptoheros*. I believe it is now in *Panamius*, but that is probably still in dispute. I really wish the “fish namers” would get their act together! I have re-bred several species for BAP because they were the same fish, but a different name.

## **DESCRIPTION**

The Rosy Cichlid is fairly small (around 5-6 inches), but a very beautiful Central American cichlid that is not often seen in the hobby. It was described by Meek and Hildebrand in 1913. It comes from the Panama Canal Zone Rio Mandingo, and is found in moderately flowing waters over sand, rocks and gravel. The red coloration of the male is its’ outstanding characteristic, varying from a reddish-pink hue on a darker background to a brilliant red over most of its’ body which I saw in one photograph. There seem to be several color variants as well as differences individual males show according to how “happy” they are. The males’ red coloration is present most of the time and they have pointed trailers on their dorsal and anal fins. Females are generally quite a bit smaller than males, which may result in part from the overly aggressive nature of the males, to the point of not allowing females to get enough food. This aggressiveness, especially between males, necessitates a large tank with many hiding areas. These fish can even survive well with many African cichlids of similar size.

## **BREEDING**

They eat all kinds of foods and have a hearty appetite. 78 to 84 degrees Fahrenheit is a good range for breeding. Weekly water changes will keep them in best color and encourage breeding. I found that I had to put the female in a separate tank to condition her, as the male would not allow her to feed. When they did breed in the community tank later where they were together, the female laid very few eggs and only a couple of fry resulted. A cave or pot with a small entrance for the female but not the larger male is recommended. Water with a PH of 7-8 works well. They begin breeding fairly small, with the female at about 1 ½ -2 inches.

During breeding, the female turns mostly white with a black pattern below. She lays the eggs in a secluded pot or cave and guards them viciously. Both are good parents, reminding me of convict cichlids, although more aggressive! The eggs are large, amber colored, and fewer in number than most cichlids. The fry seem slow growing, but do well on a variety of foods.

*Panamius panamensis*, or Rosy Cichlid, is a very colorful Central American cichlid that is in demand but not seen often. Another advantage is that it does not get too large. By paying attention to its' breeding habits, one can get much satisfaction from reproducing it and allowing others to enjoy this beautiful fish.



Pair of Rosy Cichlids