



## Blue Panda Apisto (*Apistogramma panduro*)

Order: Perciformes - Family: Cichlidae - Subfamily: Geophaginae



**Also known as:** *Apistogramma panduro* are sometimes referred to as *Apistogramma pandurini* however, the correct species name is *panduro*. The name is derived from the Peruvian fish exporters who first collected the fish. They are found in the same general area as *Apistogramma nijesseni*.

**Type:** Freshwater/Brackish Water; benthopelagic.

**Origin / Distribution:** South America: Amazon River basin, Peru (exact locality unknown), are to be found in the black water streams of Peru.

**Description:** It is a dwarf cichlid *Apistogramma panduro* (A 183) is a beautiful benthopelagic freshwater fish from Peru. *Apistogramma panduro* dwarf cichlids that are closely related to *Apistogramma nijesseni* and, in fact, they are placed in the *Apistogramma nijesseni* group. For more information about both A numbers and *Apistogramma* groups please read the information on our Wikipedia *Apistogramma* page.

**Physical Characteristics:** We can see that they are closely related to *A. nijesseni*. Both the male and female have the red band near the margin of the caudal fin. Light blue colors the body and dorsal of the male, with a black blotch on the caudal peduncle. Hopefully this new Apisto will breed prolifically so that all interested aquarists can enjoy this cool dwarf cichlid.

**Size / Weight / Age:** Usual maximum size in fish tanks (min-max): 4 - 5 cm ( 1.57" - 1.97")

**Color Form:** Females are bright yellow with black chest markings. Males will have a blue body color with brown markings.

**Sexual dimorphism:** Females are very similar to the panda apisto but with a black band extending along the belly from the chin back almost to the anal fin.

**Lifespan:** The expected life span of Blue panda apisto is 2-3 years.

**Behavior:** Peaceful, but during spawning they become territorial and aggressive. Can be kept with small, peaceful characins and with *Corydoras* catfish in a community tank.

**Habitat:** All of the *nijesseni* group apistos appear to have limited ranges in the western Amazon region. *A. panduro* are captured in black water streams near Colonia, Peru. These waters are soft and acid with a sandy substrate. pH in their native waters is usually below 6.0.

**Diet:** *Apistogramma panduro* are not fussy eaters and will adapt to most high quality foods. Of course, live food is best and greatly aids breeding. *Apistogramma panduro* form strong pair bonds and spawn in typical *Apistogramma* fashion. Broods are generally a little smaller than with some species. The fry will easily take newly hatched brine shrimp and care is typical for the genus.

**Breeding:** Eggs are deposited on the ceiling of caves and are tendered by the female parent. Soft, acidic water is required to get *Apistogramma panduro* to breed. Add plant pots for spawning sites and condition the parents with live and frozen foods. The female will tend the eggs while the male defends the spawning site. The fry should be free swimming 6-7 days after hatching, initially feed them on Infusoria. As they increase in size, feed them with newly hatched brine shrimp.

**Aquarium Setup:** Plenty of hiding places should be included in the tank along with a lot of plants. Regular water changes are required as these fish are very sensitive to poor water quality.

**Minimum Tank Size:** A good tank size is 20 gallons as a minimum and like to be kept in pairs or trios (1male:2females)

**Care Level:** Intermediate

#### Water Conditions:

- **Temperature:** Recommended water temperature for Blue panda apisto: 23 - 26 °C ( 73.4 - 78.8 °F)
- **pH:** Water pH for Blue panda apisto should be maintained within the range: 5 - 7
- **Hardness:** Water hardness (dGH): 2 - 8 °N

**Swimming Level:** These Apistos prefer soft water and leaf litter, but is not needed, but rocks, caves and wood to swim about in.

**Compatibility / Temperament:** *Apistogramma panduro* is very peaceful and can be kept with other community fish.



*Apistogramma* sp. "Pandurini"



(c) 1997 Erik Olson



*Apistogramma panduro*  
female with fry

(c) 1998 Helen Burns



*Apistogramma panduro* (female)

(c) 1998 Ken Laidlaw