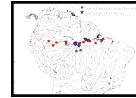




Green Discus (*Symphysodon aequifasciatus*)

Order: Perciformes - Family: Cichlidae - Subfamily: Cichlasomatinae—Tribe: Heroini



Also known as:

Type: Tropical - Freshwater; benthopelagic; pH range: 5.0 - 8.0; dH range: 7 - 12; Amazon Cichlid

Description: The Green Discus *Symphysodon tarzoo* Heckel, 1840, is a species of fish of the cichlid family. He is originally from the lowlands of the Amazon River and its tributaries, belongs to the family of cichlids from South America. The waters are usually quite acidic and soft.

Physical Characteristics: **Symphysodon** inhabit slow water areas without strong currents, populated by predators like piranhas, so it is a scary animal who likes areas with abundant vegetation, which uses as a refuge. The body is high, round, with the sides compressed. The dorsal fin covers the entire top of the fish to the tail fin. The caudal fin is shaped like a shovel, and uses it to propel you along with the pectoral fins. The anal fin, as the ridge extends from the bottom of the caudal fin to the ventral fins, very elongated and triangular in shape. Stresses in the discs the deep red color of the eyes, and 9 dark vertical stripes that present depending on your mood. These stripes are not always visible and run throughout the body. The first vertically across the eye and the latter is in the birth of the caudal fin.

Size: Max length : 13.7 cm SL male/unsexed

Color Form:

Sexual dimorphism: Sex differences are small. Appreciated only as adults. Males are generally larger and have the area of the head more bulky. They have an elongation at the end of the dorsal fin. During the breeding is possible to observe differences in the sexual organs, while females have an ovipositor rounded tube between the ventral fins and anal fins, the males have a sperm duct tip finish.

Lifespan: 10 years .

Origin: *Symphysodon discus tarzoo* Lyons, 1959 is considered a distinct species. *Symphysodon* The genus consists of three different species: *Symphysodon aequifasciatus*, *Symphysodon discus* and a new species described in 2006, *Symphysodon tarzoo*.¹ Another later study, published in August 20072 suggests a different nomenclature *S. aequifasciatus* (green disk), *Symphysodon haraldi* discs (blue and brown) and *S. discus* (Heckel disk).

Distribution: South America: Amazon River basin in tributaries along the Solimões-Amazon River from the Putumayo River in Colombia and Peru, to the Tocantins River basin in Brazil.

Behavior: Although it is usually a slow-moving fish can swim fast during long runs. Discs are gregarious fish that move in groups. Maintain a hierarchy within the group where there is always a dominant individual, usually a male or a couple. The ruling marks its territory and alienates other individuals to feed first. It is advisable to maintain a minimum of four copies to pressure dominant over the other is shared, and does not focus on one, you could even die. Discs are VERY nervous fish. They will jump in panic attacks. So it's imperative for them to feel secure. Drift wood and plants help a lot, as well keeping the tank in a quiet area. Discs tend to become aggressive between them. There's always a bully. Many people recommend having 5 to 6 Discus in order spread the aggression not always against the weaker one. They don't eat each other, but won't allow the weaker ones to eat. The harassment alone can kill a Discus, as most of them die just because of stress. They become very dark and refuse to eat for days. At that point there's little you can do. Be aware of this at the moment to buy one. If it's healthy and he's dark, in a corner DON'T BUY IT. Ask them always to feed them and watch him eat.

Habitat / Biotope: Deep, rocky areas in crevices and among roots. Normally in schools, but territorial during breeding season. Feeds on insect larvae, insects, and planktonic invertebrates. Aquarium keeping: in groups of 5 or more individuals; keep pairs in small tanks for breeding; minimum aquarium size 120 cm.

Diet: High quality pellet food, brine shrimp, and beefheart should comprise the bulk of the food given. Black worms and blood worms may also be fed on occasion.

Breeding: Clutch tenders; Many different methods are used to sex discus based on secondary sexual characteristics, but the safest method is to take a close look at the breeding tubes when they extend. The male breeding tube is always tapered while the female breeding tube is not. *Symphysodon aequifasciatus aequifasciatus* form monogamous pairs and will breed quite readily in the home aquarium. Once a pair has formed in the aquarium, they will seek out a suitable vertical surface and start cleaning it together. It is therefore important to provide your fish with a suitable vertical surface in the aquarium if you want them to breed. During the actual spawning, the female Green Discus will swim over the clean breeding site and release her eggs. The male will follow behind and promptly fertilize them. This process will be repeated multiple times. When the spawning is over, the pair will take turns fanning the eggs with their pectoral fins. *Symphysodon aequifasciatus aequifasciatus* is a dedicated parent and both sexes will help guard and care for eggs and fry. You can expect the eggs to hatch roughly 48-60 hours after being fertilized. The newly emerged fry feed off the egg sacks at first and then proceed to eat a nutritious slime excreted by the parents. Both the mother and father produce slime. Once the young leave the parents and are free swimming they need to be fed by you, you can for instance give them newly hatched brine shrimp to begin with and then gradually serve larger and larger brine shrimp as the fry grow bigger. The fry require extremely high water quality to survive and stay healthy. Change upwards of 90-95% of the water during each water change and carry out such as change at least once, preferably twice, a day. The fry may be left with the parents or be separated out. If you keep the pair for breeding purposes, move the pair to a separate aquarium as soon as the fry no longer rely on them for food.

Aquarium Setup: If they are to be kept for display purposes only then a tank of 40gal should be provided. Water quality is needed, especially if you feed them with meat. But more than that, they need water changes in order to grow. They are very susceptible when young, so you want to help them grow quickly. What's the key, water changes, water changes, water changes. Many people worry a lot with having them in soft acidic water. After long times worrying a lot with these parameters, I heard and experienced that water changes are the most imperative parameter to have them grow quick and healthy. Where I live the water is hard and with a high pH and the only thing I do is adding an anti-chlorine product. I notice the difference in growth. I also heard that breeders in China don't have filters in the tanks!! They do 50% water changes every other day, that's all!! Of course they don't have regular tanks like us. Keep in mind that water changes affect plants so plan on getting very strong plants.

Minimum Tank Size: Minimum of a 20gal tank for a breeding pair.

Care Level: Difficult

Water Conditions:

Swimming Level: Midlevel

Compatibility / Temperament: Semi-aggressive; Peaceful species are best. Small tetras, cories, and smaller plecos work best.

