

BRITISH KILLIFISH ASSOCIATION



Roloffia hastingsi. Roloff 1971.

Biotope: Native to Sierra Leone inhabiting shallow streams and pools which although are more or less openly situated are in fact well shaded by overhanging grasses and terrestrial plants. Exact water conditions unknown. A paper should appear in the Autumn of this year (1972) in the German aquatic magazine "DATZ."

Description of the male: Typical of the small *Roloffia* species in shape and in behaviour but perhaps slightly more robust than the majority of the formerly SL coded species.

Dorsally an olive green with a few metallic highlights. From the head along the flanks the basic colouration is light green which is superimposed by many red blotches and spots which run together to give a mosaic effect when the fish is viewed from a distance. The caudal peduncle is more heavily marked and may take on a completely red pigmentation. The belly region is variable and can be from pale green to pale ochre.

The dorsal fin is triangulate and basically a light green with minute red spots and lightly margined red. The caudal has a centre of blue-green with bold markings of crimson, the lower half of the fin has a submargin of red and a final outer margin of canary yellow. The top half of the caudal has a thin red submarginal with a very thin final edging of pale blue or pale yellow. Anal light green with four distinct red spots at the root and an outer margin thinly lined dark red. Pectorals light orange to deep orange at the tips. Pelvics light brown tipped dark red.

Size attained in the aquarium: Approx 2".

Description of the female: Dorsally pale olive, flanks pale brownish to clay having a few darkish markings close to the caudal peduncle and a "*Rivulus*" type spot. Belly region pinkish. Size attained in the aquarium approx 1¾" but on occasions can be as large as the male.

Maintenance and breeding: Perhaps one of the easiest of the small *Roloffias* to keep in aquaria *Roloffia hastingsi* seeming to enjoy almost any type of water. Like many members of the genus, rather shy and retiring and should therefore be given subdued lighting, a dark bottomed tank well planted with plenty of hiding places, floating plants of immense value to the well being of this species. Water conditions not critical a DH of from 4 to 7 degrees German sufficing. The pH should be in the region of about 6.6 to 6.8. With the treatment outlined *Roloffia hastingsi* should show to its best advantage.

Feeding presents few problems as both good quality flake foods, frozen foods and live foods will be readily consumed. Growth would seem better if half of the diet is of a prepared food.

Basically a bottom spawning species preferring to lay eggs upon peat fibres or sunken nylon mops, occasionally a few eggs will be laid upon floating mops. Most prolific if bred the natural way, that is in well planted tanks but egg production rather limited in otherwise bare tanks. Eggs may be collected by the normal method of picking from nylon mops but eggs are prone to fungus using this method. Picking of eggs rather difficult as the size of the egg is small and apt to be laid inside the strands of nylon. Colour of egg transparent. Fry hatch in 16 to 18 days and are extremely small and would require infusoria for the first week or so of life or a proprietary brand of liquid feed, this may be followed by the normal fry foods.

Like many of the small *Roloffia* species growth is not rapid and perhaps the fish are not fully grown until about ten to twelve months old but sexing will occur at about the four month stage of growth, this may be observed by the darkening of the outer margins of the caudal fin.

Best results for breeding have been obtained by leaving the newly hatched fry in with the parent fish and dipping the fry from the tank after two weeks or so and placing them in growing-on quarters. It would seem that they get the benefit of the high infusoria feeding from the planted tank, it is quite noticeable the difference between fish raised in this manner to those raised in the more conventional way.

Summary: In all ways a very satisfying species and one that could safely be suggested to the novice. If given conditions to its liking will show quite well in a tank. Males not prone to excessive fighting. Females should be kept strictly isolated from females of other small *Roloffia* species as one would have great difficulty in telling them apart if they should get mixed.

Resembles in colour pattern the species *Roloffia geryi* and *Roloffia roloffi* to which species *Roloffia hastingsi* is related. Named by Herr E. Roloff in honour of Dr. Hastings, the species being formerly coded as RSL 29.

Fred Wright,
Tech. Editor BKA.