

Ornamental Fish Farming

are incorporated in their nests. **Grouping:** 1 ♂ to 1 ♀ when spawning in a glass tank, or groups of 4 ♂ to 5 or 6 ♀ in a 5 or 6 square metre pond. **Other comments:** this is a delicate species, especially problematic during harvesting and shipping. Can be raised indoors, but does particularly well in ponds. Susceptible to *Lymphocystis*.

OVERALL RATING: **reasonable**, but fairly difficult to produce. There is a fair demand at slightly higher prices than for the other *Trichogasters*.

Paradise fish (*Macropodus opercularis*). **Group 2:** batch-spawning; bubble-nesting brood-carers. **EASE OF BREEDING:** 1 to 2. (Infusoria as the first food.) **OVERALL EASE OF PRODUCTION:** 1 to 2. **Tank size:** 1: 600 x 300 x 300 mm (24 x 12 x 12 in). This can be divided into 2 breeding sections for small, newly mature fish. **Breeding water:** soft to hard. **Temperature:** mid-range to warm: 25 – 29°C (77 – 84°F). **Depth:** ½ to ⅔. **Peat extract:** not essential but can be used. **Spawning medium:** plastic plant or similar refuge, plus floating squares of Styrofoam. (Males do not injure females.) **Grouping:** 1 ♂ to 1 ♀. **Other comments:** unlike some of the Anabantoidei, the species does well in all stages of production in glass tanks indoors.

OVERALL RATING: **reasonable to good**. An easily produced fish which sells in fair numbers, favoured for its ability to live outdoors in cooler climates. There are also albino, apricot and a few less common colour strains for which the same production methods can be used.

Pearl (lace) gourami (*Trichogaster leeri*). **Group 2:** batch-spawning; bubble-nesting brood-carers. **EASE OF BREEDING:** 2. (Infusoria as the first food.) Unlike *T. trichopterus*, males do not injure females during spawning. **OVERALL EASE OF PRODUCTION:** 2 to 3. **Tank size:** 1: 600 x 300 x 300 mm (24 x 12 x 12 in). **Breeding water:** soft to moderately hard. **Temperature:** warm: 27° – 29°C (81° – 84°F). **Depth:** ⅓. **Peat extract:** can be helpful for this fairly shy species. **Spawning medium:** plastic plant or similar refuge, though males do not injure females. Floating squares of Styrofoam. **Grouping:** 1 ♂ to 1 ♀. **Other comments:** they do well in outdoor ponds but can be raised to a sellable size in indoor systems including glass tanks. The species is delicate, and

can be especially troublesome during harvesting and shipping. Susceptible to *Lymphocystis*.

OVERALL RATING: **very good**. Excellent seller at good prices, locally produced fish are often preferred over imports as they do not travel well. Good demand for larger sizes.

Pink kissing gourami (*Helastoma temminckii*). **Group 2:** batch-spawning; bubble-nesting brood-carers. **EASE OF BREEDING:** 3. Larvae are large enough to take brine shrimp as a first food, but infusoria can be beneficial. Though not normally necessary, hormone injection can be useful if females are not well conditioned, though there must be some visible plumpness for hormones to be successful. **OVERALL EASE OF PRODUCTION:** 2 to 3. **Tank size:** 3: 900 x 400 x 400 mm (36 x 16 x 16 in), or larger facility. **Breeding water:** soft to hard. **Temperature:** warm: 27° – 29°C (81° – 84°F). **Depth:** full. **Peat extract:** not necessary. **Spawning medium:** several large homemade plastic plants for refuge. **Grouping:** 2 ♂ to 1 ♀. Larger groups can also be used. **Other comments:** they are best grown out in outdoor ponds, though small fry are extremely vulnerable to insect predation in these circumstances. They are big eaters and more easily grown in an outdoor environment where there is algal growth and other natural food. In the absence of this, they are difficult to maintain in good condition.

OVERALL RATING: **excellent**, though fairly demanding in production. Very big sellers in different sizes at a good price.

Siamese fighting fish (*Betta splendens*). **Group 2:** batch-spawning; bubble-nesting brood-carers. **EASE OF BREEDING:** 2. (Infusoria as the first food.) **OVERALL EASE OF PRODUCTION:** 5. At a few months of age, males have to be separated and raised individually. **Tank size:** 1: 600 x 300 x 300 mm (24 x 12 x 12 in). This can be divided into 2 spawning sections if preferred. **Breeding water:** soft to hard. **Temperature:** warm: 27° – 29°C (81° – 84°F). **Depth:** ½. **Peat extract:** not necessary. **Spawning medium:** refuge for females is critical as they may be killed by males during spawning. Homemade plastic plant or coconut fibre serves well. Floating squares of Styrofoam for nest building. **Grouping:** 1 ♂ to 1 ♀. **Other**