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African Knifefish

Sci Name: *Xenomystus nigri*

Family: Notopteridae

Origin: Africa; Zaire

Max Size: 12"

pH: Acidic

Temp: 72-82 F.

Tank Size: 55 Gallons

Feeding: Carnivorous

The African Knifefish is a large carnivorous predator. Their bodies are built in the usual Knifefish shape; stocky build with a very long-based anal fin. The "tail" of this fish resembles a sword blade, hence its common name of Knifefish. This particular Knifefish lacks a dorsal fin.

Tank Setup

A large tank is required to for this fish to thrive as an adult. Juveniles may be kept together but as adults they may fight. A heavily planted aquarium is recommended with a slightly acidic pH and plenty of swimming space. Floating plants should be used to subdue the lighting, as Knifefish are nocturnal. Being nocturnal, they should also be fed after the lights are turned off. These fish often make "clicking" sounds which can be heard when netting the fish.

Feeding

African Knifefish are voracious predators that need meat in their diet. Worms, beef heart and fish are all relished. Live foods are recommended.

Water Chemistry

These fish appreciate an acidic pH around 6.0-6.5 with soft water at about 5 dGH. A general temperature of 72-80 degrees F will suffice.

Breeding

Little is known about the breeding behavior of this fish. Females lay up to 200 tiny eggs which hatch shortly. Sexing is said to be impossible.