

KIRKCALDY AQUARIST SOCIETY INFORMATION SHEET

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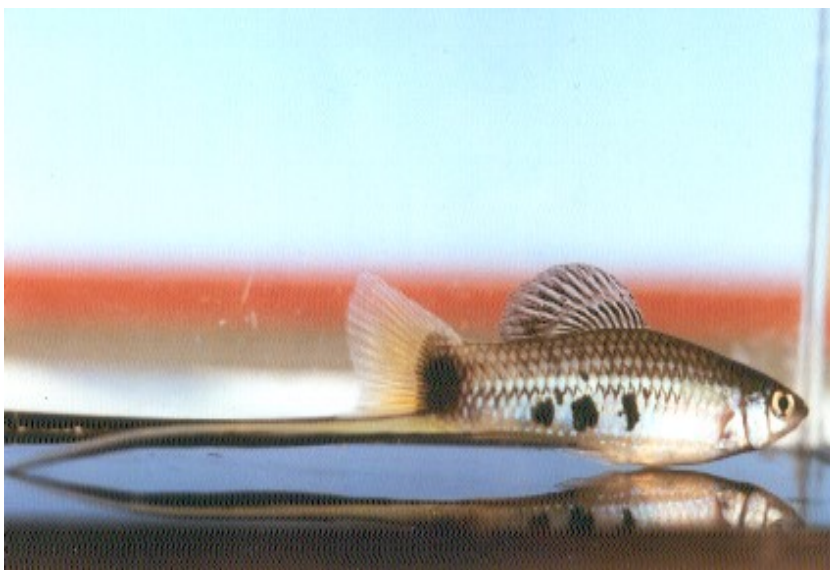


Name:- Xiphophorus Montezumae

Family:- Poeciliidae

Origin:- Mexico

Size:- Male 5cms, Female 6cms



This fish was first collected by J.O.Snyder in 1899. Over the intervening years there was much confusion over imports and distribution of Xiphophorus Cortezii, Xiphophorus Nezahualcoyotl and the true Xiphophorus Montezuma.

It would appear that it was first definitely imported to Germany in 1987 by Manfred Meyer and then onto the U.K. in 1988.

In the wild this species ranges through the Rio Gallinas system and also notably in the Ojo Caliente and Cienega Granda.

This fish was named after the Aztec emperor Montezuma, and is truly a magnificent species of swordtail.

The Montezuma swordtail is one of the largest species of swordtails with the male capable of achieving a sword length of up to one & half times his body length. It has a fairly slender body shape with several lateral zigzag body stripes. Specimens from the Rio Gallinas collection, also commonly named "Tamosopo" after the popular water falls where they are collected, frequently have heavily black spotted colouration.

The fish from the Ojo Callente collection tend to be larger specimens with a pleasant green lustre and a lack of spotting. In the males the dorsal fin is spectacularly sail-like, and along with the massive tail, produces a truly wonderful specimen.

The females, although lacking the sail-like dorsal and sword, are also really spectacular fish.

In the Aquarium I have found this species to be a peaceful swordtail quite capable of living in a community Aquarium with equally sized fish.

Its accommodation should be clean and well planted with a temperature of around 25c. Provided it is well fed and housed in a heavily planted tank it can be successfully flock-bred, but if serious breeding is envisaged then gravid females should be placed in a specially prepared breeding tank to ensure a high percentage of fry survival. Brood can average from 12 to 30 although I have had mature females produce in excess of 50 fry.

Given adequate growing space and a varied diet of high quality flake food and principally on newly hatched Brine Shrimp, I found that the young reached up to 3cms in 3 months and where able to be put back into the species tank with plenty of water movement from the power filter, this was to duplicate their natural surroundings.

Provided that the temperature is not too high and the tank is not too heavily populated, high quality sword tails of this species can be produced with care and attention.

Good males will not develop a sword until the fish is almost fully grown and this could be when the males are about a year old.

Males that develop at an earlier stage should be removed from the breeding colony to ensure that only the largest late developing males sire the next generation.

The best males I have produced did not develop swords until almost 15 months old.

Regular water changes and good quality feeding are essential to the production of good offspring.

Text:- Ian Sinclair.

Photo:- Ian Sinclair.