

## Black Ghost Knife Fish

*Apteronotus albifrons* belongs to the Family Apterontidae



Main Pic: Black Ghost Knife Fish

Inset: "White" Ghost Knife Fish are occasionally available

### Natural Range

The Amazon River basin, generally in fast flowing waters of rivers and streams with a sandy bottom.

### Maximum Size and Longevity

It can reach 60 cm in the right conditions and can live more than 7 years given the right conditions.

### Water Quality

Enjoys soft neutral to slightly acidic water:

Temperature: 23°C - 28°C

pH: 6.5- 7.5

General Hardness less than 200ppm

### Feeding

Black Ghost Knife Fish are carnivorous and eat insects, small crustaceans and fish in the wild. For this reason, they enjoy a mixture of live foods such as Daphnia, Brine Shrimp, meaty frozen foods, worms and feeder fish. They will also eat small pellets, peas, earthworms and frozen community fish foods.

### Compatibility

It is a peaceful fish that needs peaceful community tank mates. It is best not to keep them with small fish (<4cm) as they are predatory. Black Ghost Knife Fish should not be kept with their own species as they will show aggressiveness to their own kind in a small tank.

### Colour and Varieties

This fish has striking contrast with the body and fins generally a jet black in colour, while there is usually a white stripe on the back starting at the head and extending about halfway down the body. There is also a 'white' variety available

### Sexing and Breeding

There are few reports on successful breeding in aquariums – although we recently had some large specimens spawn at Aquarium Industries! They are produced in large numbers on farms in Asia, in many cases hormone injections are used to achieve this.

### General Information

The Black Ghost is nocturnal and therefore shy in nature and sensitive to bright light. For this reason a well planted tank and hiding places should be provided. It grows fairly large therefore it needs a bigger tank. With its striking shape and peculiar swimming habit (it swims by generating wavelike motions in its anal fin which extends along most of the body), this fish makes an interesting addition to the community tank.

It is a scale-less fish and is therefore sensitive to many medications and changes in water conditions. Like most scale-less fish, it is prone to external parasitic attack such as WhiteSpot (*Ichthyophthirius multifiliis*) and care must be taken when treating with copper based medications. Good husbandry and correct water conditions will reduce the chance of disease in these fish.