Steel-blue Lyretail Killie

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Fundulopanchax gardneri nigerianus, Aphyosemion gardneri nigerianum

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Quick Stats: Steel-blue Lyretail Killie
Family: Aplocheilidae **Range:** West Africa **Size:** Up to 2½ inches **Diet:** Carnivore **Tank Set-up:** Freshwater: Plants **Tank Conditions:** 73-79°F; pH 6.0-7.5; dH 5-8 **Minimum Tank Capacity:** 20 gallon **Light:** Medium **Temperament:** Peaceful **Swimming Level:** No specific level **Care Level:** Easy **Reproduction:** Egg Layer

The Steel-blue Lyretail Killie is also known as the Steel-blue Aphyosemion. There are many subspecies of *F. gardneri.* This *nigerianus* variety of Killifish is normally found in water holes, streams, and marshes in Africa. It has also been tank bred. The term "Killie" is derived from the Dutch word meaning ditch or channel, not because this fish is a killer in the aquarium. The Steel-blue Lyretail Killie is ideal for the community aquarium, and this subspecies, especially, will add vibrant color and activity. The male of this species is vibrant blue/green with many red spots running the length of his body. The tips of the dorsal, anal, and caudal fin are fringed in yellow. The female is less brightly colored with many small brown spots running the length of her body.

The Steel-blue Lyretail Killie is not demanding and can adapt to a variety of water conditions. It requires a heavily planted aquarium and softer water on the acidic side.

Killifish have some unusual rearing techniques. A breeding tank is ideal with a 2-3 inch layer of peat at the bottom. The fish will bury the eggs in the peat. After spawning, remove the peat that contain the eggs and press out any excess water. Place the moist peat with the eggs in a plastic bag or sealed jar for 3 weeks at room temperature. After that time period, add tank water back to the peat to hatch the fry. Place the fry in a small holding tank and feed the newborn fish live baby brine shrimp.

The Steel-blue Lyretail Killie will accept most live foods such as brine shrimp, white worms, tubifex, and some dry flake and frozen foods.

Ideal tank mates include:

- Tetras
- Danios
- Rasboras
- Dwarf Gouramis
- Angelfish
- Discus
- Rainbowfish
- Guppies
- Platies
- Mollies
- Swordtails
- Plecos
- Small Scavenger Catfish

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