

“EL QUINCE” SWORDTAIL, *Xiphophorus continens*

by Chase Klinesteker SWAM, May-June 2016



Pair of “El Quince” Swordtails, male on right

DESCRIPTION

Xiphophorus continens, or “El Quince” Pigmy Swordtail, is a small livebearer that comes from Mexico at the headwaters of the Rio Ojo Frio, where *Xiphophorus montezumae* are also found. Clean, swift running water of slightly cooler temperature and lots of vegetation exists in their natural habitat. It is a member of the swordtail group, but the male only has a very short sword of about 1 mm. Females reach about 1 ½ inches, with males slightly smaller. They can dart and swim very fast and like plenty of plant cover. Males can be quite aggressive, so it is best to have more females than males in the aquarium. Because of their small size, they do best in a species aquarium and are well suited for a nano tank. Water parameters are quite flexible with Ph 7. T o 8. and 22 to 24 degrees C. working well.

A SHY FISH

This is a fairly shy fish that will take time to adjust to new surroundings, but once it finds no other fish to threaten it, they are out in the open and more visible. They eat a variety of foods, but until settled in, are somewhat picky eaters. They love newly hatched brine shrimp! Gestation is about one month and a female will drop from 6 to 20 fry, who conceal themselves very well for 3-4 days. After that, the fry can be seen slowly moving and feeding, and if well fed, the parents show little interest in the fry. Their lifespan is about 3-6 years if they are kept well covered, but they are good jumpers!