



Zoogonecticus tequila

BAP report

By Rich Bressler

Zoogonecticus tequila, Tequila Splitfin, is a species in the Goodiidae family. Its name comes from the Tequila Volcano in Mexico. It is now a critically endangered species on the IUCN Red List. Its distribution is now believed to be limited to a single spring pool in the East end of Teuchitlan in Jalisco, Mexico. The pool is only 13 feet in diameter and has a depth of 20 centimeters. It is believed there are possibly fewer than 50 mature adults left. To make matters even worse, it must share this environment with introduced invasive species like the Trinidadian Guppy and the more aggressive *Heterandria dimaculata*.¹

The tequila females reach a length of about two and a half inches. They are more drab in coloration than the males. They have a dark grey mottling on a silver body that fades to white on their bellies. They produce anywhere from 5 to 20 fry every two months or so. The males are a bit smaller than the females but have interesting color. They have an orange band on their caudal fin and both the dorsal and anal fins are trimmed in a cream color. Their bodies are darker with more mottling. Both male and females have some scales that have an iridescent shine.

It is probably best to keep the Tequilas in a species only tank. Some sites on the internet say the Tequilas can be aggressive with other species. I keep mine in a forty gallon tank along with *Ataeniobius toweri*, the Blue Tailed Goodie. They seem to ignore each other. They are not real fussy with water conditions. Just give them good filtration and water changes and they will do fine. I feed them flake food and shrimp pellets in the morning and either live blackworms or frozen brine shrimp in the evening. I will also toss in some veggie kelp pellets from time to time.

I keep my Tequilas in a pH of around 7.8. I must give Gary Boyer credit for this. I noticed he was using *Limia vittata* as dither fish in his Lake Malawi tank. They looked spectacular. I didn't know they could take a pH that high. So I began using my *Limia perugiae* as dithers in my cichlid tank. I could not believe the difference in size and color after they had been in there for a while. I use Malawi/Victoria Buffer by Seachem to keep the pH at a constant 7.8 to 8.0. I now use Malawi buffer for all my livebearers with great results.

So if you are looking for a small livebearer for one of your tanks, I would recommend the *Zoogonecticus tequila*. They are easy to keep, reproduce fairly rapidly, and you will be preserving a fish who will probably be extinct in the wild pretty soon. As they reproduce, pass them on to other hobbyists, so we do not lose this species!

1. [Arkive.org/Tequila Splitfin](http://Arkive.org/Tequila%20Splitfin)