

# Sterba's corydora (Corydoras sterbai)

## Food:

Corydoras sterbai is omnivorous. All the usual forms of food will be easily accepted. When you feed the surface fish of your aquarium, uneaten food will fall to the bottom of the aquarium. Of course, the Corydoras can eat these crumbs but it will not be enough. It will therefore be necessary to feed them specifically so that they do not suffer from hunger.

For this, the bottom pellets will be essential. Small tip: cut the pellets into pieces and scatter them in several places in the aquarium to allow the Corydoras sterbai to feed properly.

For their well-being, vary their diet with frozen or live food (vases and mosquito larvae will be particularly appreciated!). You can also top up with a vegetal slice of cucumber or zucchini (prick the pieces on a stalk to keep them at the bottom of the aquarium) and boiled peas.

## Behavior:

This fish has a gregarious instinct, so it is essential that the Corydoras sterbai be kept with a minimum of 6 individuals, 10 being ideal. This will allow it to feel safe, it will be happier and will feel good in its aquarium. The more they are, the more the benefits are visible in their behavior: they play, gather to rest, take their meals together and especially they breed!

Regarding this point, it is estimated that:

- group of 6 to 8 individuals: strict minimum
- group of 9 to 13 individuals: correct viability
- group of more than 14 individuals: behavior similar to natural

It will spend most of its life searching the bottom of the aquarium for food. It alternates phases of excavations with phases of rest. It is not uncommon to see the whole troop resting glued to each other in the shade of a root or leaf.

It also likes to have fun, in the current, in the middle part of the aquarium, as well as along the windows (when no other species intimidates him).

If your Corydoras are completely inactive during the day, it may be due to a problem of cohabitation (other species intimidate them), a too small number of individuals, an unsuitable aquarium or a current too weak. Check these points and you will see your Corydoras activate even during the day!

Even if the corydoras are very fearful, you can, with gentleness and patience, acustom them to your presence. For this, you must always make very slow and very calm gestures. When your corydoras do not flee you, it denotes a level of fulfillment, security and confidence well above normal!

## Cohabitation :

This very endearing species is of an unparalleled kindness. Very peaceful, the Corydoras sterbai easily coexists with all other species of fish and will never try to fight anyone.

Choose very quiet roommates because Corydoras are easily intimidated by species that are too bright or too big. It cohabits easily with the other fish of the Amazonian biotope living in the same geographical area as him, such as the Ember Tetra will make perfect roommates.

Be careful though, this little fish is pretty shy and will die if around him there are restless fish, too lively, like the Molly. Also avoid coexistence with Ancistrus as this would subject the Corydoras to high levels of food competition leading to stress, malnutrition and disease. Indeed, Ancistrus consume food faster than Corydoras and can be aggressive in its distribution. Faced with this glutton, small Corydoras would then have little chance of having their meals.

### Who am I?

Scientific name: Corydoras sterbai

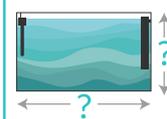
Common name: Sterba's corydora

Group: Callichthyidae

### Difficulty



### Volume



100 L / 22 imp gal / 26 US gal

### Water parameters



Temperature:  
21 to 28 °C or 70 to 82°F

pH: 6 to 7.5

Hardness: 1 to 10 °dGH

### Origin and biotope



Origin: Bolivia, Brazil

Biotope: Amazonian

### Dimorphism



The female is larger and rounder than the male

### Size



6 to 7 cm (2.4 to 2.8")

### Life expectancy



7 years

### Living zone



Middle and depth

### Individuals



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Be careful however, a *Corydoras sterbai* and a *Corydoras aeneus* do not recognize themselves as being of the same species and will not associate in a shoal. This is an example but this principle is valid for all species of *Corydoras*.

### Breeding:

The breeding of this species will be similar to other *Corydoras* and is quite easy to obtain. It sometimes happens that the breeding is triggered spontaneously when the fish are in their aquarium.

The optimum age for breeding your *Corydoras* is around 3/4 years old. Note that the older a female is, the higher the thickness of the eggs. They are thus more resistant and have a better chance of success, considerably increasing the number of fry. Before this age, you can get some fry all the same. If you want to make your *Corydoras* breed, you understand the importance of installing them from the beginning in a suitable and well maintained aquarium, in order for them to live as long as possible, for a regular and successful breeding in quantity and in quality!

In general, changing water with slightly cooler water a few degrees (about 2-3 degrees) is enough to trigger spawning. Indeed, this simulates their natural environment, because the breeding takes place during the rainy season. You can repeat the water change several times until spawning. Note that this can sometimes take a little time because *Corydoras* paradise and continue before egg laying.

When mating, the pair of *Corydoras sterbai* will adopt the so-called «T» position. The fish are found perpendicular to each other, which allows the female to suck semen of the male.

The female may lay up to 100 eggs, but some will not be fertilised. Eggs will hatch 72 hours later.

If you want to keep a large number of fry, plan a specific aquarium dedicated to their growth. You can provide a small filter, with a thin layer of fine sand, and provide some hiding places essential to satisfy the instinct to hide fry.

To summary, you can choose two strategies:

1 - Have a tank of 50 liters or 13 gallons, put 1 female for several males. Add large, stiff-leafed plants such as Anubias so the female can lay their eggs. After the laying, remove the parents so that the small fry can grow fully.

2 - Spawning can also take place in the community aquarium. In this case, you can recover the eggs to put them in a breeding tank. Isolation of eggs is important because *Corydoras* can eat their own eggs.

Fry food: infusoria, artemia nauplies, pellets for fry or finely chopped.

### Its aquarium

In general, two parameters are essential for the *Corydoras* aquarium: a non-cutting substrate and good filtration generating current.

**Firstly the soil:** it is imperative to use very fine gravel or sand (like beach sand). Indeed, it was discovered in early 2018 that sand played a key role in the oral hygiene of *Corydoras*. In addition, by swallowing this sand at full speed and spitting it by their gills in order to look for food, the *Corydoras* get rid of any parasites that could be fatal to them. It is imperative to avoid sharp ground like quartz, which damages the barbels of your fish, and is going to mutilate them completely.

**Then the current:** more than the length of the facade, it is especially the current that is important in an aquarium for *Corydoras*. Indeed, they are excellent swimmers and are... athletes! So, steer a strong current on the «middle» area of the aquarium, leave the bottom and the surface with a little less current. You will see your *Corydoras* feast on going swimming against the current in this area (if no other species intimidates them)! For everyone to rest, lower the intensity of the current during the night or stop it.

As for decoration, if you want to recreate the natural environment of the *Corydoras Adolfoi* and promote its well-being, create a decoration with driftwood roots that will form beautiful hiding places and do not plant too much. You can add alder fruits and dried leaves to the aquarium, which will have a nice natural effect (you will have to renew them before they rot). You can leave on a proportion of 50 to 80% of sand beaches essential for the search, 30 to 40% of wood and 10 to 20% of plants. If your fish are comfortable in your aquarium, they will not hesitate to move. A *Corydoras* that does not swim is a fish uncomfortable in its environment.

For plants, choose sturdy plants with slow growth and broad leaves. As fertilizer is strongly discouraged in an aquarium in *Corydoras*, opt for plants that do not require this type of feed.

Whatever your choices in terms of layout, still keep enough sandy beach to *Corydoras* so they can search the substrate.

*Corydoras* are quite sensitive to water pollution. Make water changes of 10 to 20% of the volume per week.

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### Good to Know

There are over 200 species of Corydoras! Moreover, it should be noted a risk of hybridization between Corydoras of the same line.

Corydoras are often considered «cleaners». It is true that they are scavengers but they will never replace the work of the aquarist! For example, it does not eat their excrement or that of other fish. Thus, these fish are often bought for «practical» purposes (which remains questionable) to the detriment of their well-being. But you will understand, the Corydoras are nice fish that deserve all your attention!

Corydoras Sterbai has no scales, which makes it particularly sensitive to salt, chemicals and drugs. This also requires maintenance, clean water and stabilized parameters (do not introduce Corydoras in immature aquariums). **IT IS NOT RECOMMENDED TO PUT FERTILIZER** in a container containing Corydoras. If you notice signs of stress, such as fast breathing and then lethargy (stay still, sometimes near the surface), immediately change 50% of the water (provide a good water conditioner). Be careful, the new water must have the same parameters as the tank, including the temperature. If you isolate your sick fish, it may wilt even faster. Try to stick the hospital tray to the main aquarium so that the sick Corydoras can see its congeners.

Like all Corydoras, this species is able to swallow an air bubble on the surface. Indeed, it is a kind of «intestinal» breathing that allows the fish to supplement its oxygen supply when necessary.

The Corydoras sterbai have eyes that are oriented in all directions. If you watch them for a long time, you can see them wink at you !!!

Its barbels are used to search the ground for food. It is because of these «whiskers» that Corydoras are called «catfish».

Corydoras are capable of killing a human in exceptional conditions. Pay close attention to their backbones or pectorals! Depending on the species, they have hemotoxic toxins, hepatotoxic toxins, neurotoxic, etc. Did you know that they do not have a natural predator? It is thanks to this weapon with which they are able to kill their assailant in a very virulent way. Even the piranhas refuse to attack the corydoras! In the case of a sting, it is impossible to remove the real sting, it's like a real harpoon. In addition, the corydoras injects at this time a maximum dose of toxins. Rest assured, the corydoras are very much scared, so it is rare that a situation of deadly contact happens. Most of the time, they will flee for such a situation to happen. But be careful when you put your hands in the water!

Use a large mesh net to prevent stuck in it.