



Flagfish or American Flagfish (*Jordanella floridae*)

Order: Cyprinodontiformes - Family: Cyprinodontidae



Also known as: native American pupfish

Type: Tropical Freshwater - Egg Layer

Origin: Reported from western portion of panhandle of Florida and from South Carolina.

Description: The flagfish or American flagfish, *Jordanella floridae*, is a killifish native to Florida. It received its name because the male fish resembles the American flag, with a large black/blue dot and alternating red and black/blue stripes on its body. It is a common, native fish in Florida that is occasionally found in fish stores. They make quick work of hair algae and they may also eat plants in a planted aquarium. Florida (*Jordanella floridae*) Goode et Bean, 1879 Cyprinodontidae) Despite its colorful and interesting life, *Jordanella floridae*, has not gained much popularity among aquarists. Name of the species indicates that this fish is the birthplace of Florida, more precisely, its southern part, where the fish is common in many marshes and whirlpools. In Europe, it first appeared in Berlin in 1914.

Physical Characteristics: The largest specimens reach 6 cm in females, males are colorful, with red-green sparkling rows of scales. Painting female modest. The body is much shorter and more laterally compressed than most other cyprinodonts. The unique spiny fin rays and unusual body qualify it for a separate genus. The body of both sexes is similar, with the male size about 25-30% larger than the female (3" vs. 2 1/4") flattened sunfish-like shape, with dorsal and anal fins displaced to the rear, gives it an unmistakable silhouette. It is easily the most colorful of our native aquarium fishes, rivaling the Dwarf Gouramis in overall attractiveness. The origin, unique shape, and bright colors should qualify the *Jordanella floridae* as the signature fish in the AKA logo, rather than some non-native that is rarely kept by most modern killifish aquarists. The particular color pattern of the male is even more reason we should proudly display this fish as our logo. In a well lit, heavily planted tank, the male takes on the appearance that leads to the common name. "American-Flag Fish" requires the hyphen of a compound adjective, for the male looks as if he dressed in the national pennant. With red stripes on the sides, and an upper fore-quadrant of deep blue, the resemblance is uncanny. The iridescent green-white spot on each scale makes the stars in the blue field, as well as the "white" rows between the red stripes (if you don't mind a grass-stained look to the white). The upper and lower edges of the scales are bright red, forming solid, horizontal, brilliant red stripes. The transparent unpaired fins are a pale sky blue, but dorsal and anal are so covered with red markings that red is the dominant hue. The female sports a false eyespot in the center of her side, directly below the start of her dorsal fin, and another in the rear base of her dorsal fin. Her basic color is tan to gray, and only the central portion of two or three scale rows may carry the iridescent green shine. She has a chameleon-like ability to shift colors and patterns in all kinds of interesting ways. Sometimes a checkerboard, then vertically barred, her most happy appearance is to echo the central eye spot several times back toward the caudal fin, each spot with less contrast as the tail is approached. At the height of breeding passion, she can become a buttery bright yellow, with almost no dark body markings. The eyespot on the side of the male is still present, exactly at the right angled corner of the blue star field. It is not so hard-edged and well defined as in the female. While the male loses his dorsal spot as he matures, the female's jet-black dorsal spot has a brilliant white "iris," making it more obvious than her normal eye. It should confuse many predators. The male flashes his bright red unpaired fins, to attract the female's attention, and uses them in the actual mating as described below. The upward facing mouth has somewhat wide fat "lips." His sharp teeth are capable of taking neat bites out of sword plant leaves, if enough algae, riccia and duck-weed aren't present to satisfy the craving for vegetable matter. Their face has an expression that some have described as "froggy."

Size & Sexual Dimorphism: The body of both sexes is similar, with the male size about 25-30% larger than the female (3" vs. 2 1/4") Females have a less colorful, checkered yellow appearance with a large spot on the dorsal fin. Bodies of females tend to have a more round shape.

Color Form: The iridescent green-white spot

Lifespan: 8 years

Behavior: Like many partially vegetarian fish, the routine behavior is a slow and dignified search for algae, and a calm resting position among top weeds. In shallower tanks, the resting position may be nearer the bases of plants. A mated pair will spend most of their non-breeding time in close proximity, with lots of affectionate brushing and touching. Rarely will they allow the other out of visual range. While seldom molesting others, more aggressive species can cause the floridiae to become timid and to hide. Like many killies, the young do become frantic when frightened, but this tends to go away with age. Small babies are often very hard to see. They instantly dive for cover at any approach to the tank. The most striking behavior is during mating, described in detail below. The spawning behavior is radically different in different conditions, which has led to a lot of confusion in the literature. 1,3-8,10 Hopefully, this report will start to clarify this point, and future efforts can proceed with better direction. Most of the cited references contain some material factual errors, and only the JAKAKillie Notes references should be trusted. 2,9 In particular, the males are larger than the females, they are very brightly colored, they don't "dash around" the tank, and they don't molest other fish, despite the claims of some famous encyclopedists.

Habitat: Peninsular Florida north to St. Johns and Ochlockonee River drainages. Freshwater; brackish; bentho-pelagic; non-migratory

Diet: Mostly Herbivorous. Algae and various aquatic plants. Also Feeds on worms, crustaceans, insects and plant matter. As the fish eat soft plants should ensure their prosperity in the aquarium, or to use plants with stiff leaves. They need to feed the plant food (spinach puree, scalded with boiling water leaves iceberg lettuce and cabbage). Very good food is treated with boiling water, chopped young nettle leaves or kulbaby.

Breeding: The eggs are laid in holes prepared by the male, as well as on plants and the surrounding objects. Fish spawn in the majority of 5 days. Every day the female lays dozens of eggs. After spawning, it must be to isolate. Incubation lasts for 6 days. Once the fry begin to swim, catch a male sdelia and fry fed brine shrimp. Two weeks later, the water from the fry from the spawning of individual vessels merge into a single tank and the fry are fed more roughtage. They should be regularly fed with vegetable food. Ideal for keeping aquarium fish are exposed on the sunlight, with a well overgrown with algae. Under optimal conditions, the young reach sexual maturity after three months. Spawning fish are planted in pairs in 20-liter vessels. Males care for eggs and fry, and its territory will not tolerate the presence of any fellow mind, nor the presence of other fish. Spawning aquarium should have plenty of plants and light.

Aquarium Setup: Fish of this species are separated. They organize and small, but well covered with aquariums, which gets the morning sun light. Tank should be well lit (especially in the morning for good amounts of algae growth) with dark substrate and many plants. Provide a logical amount of open swimming area as well. Slow moving to still water is a must. Brackish water is preferred. Acclimate to brackish VERY slowly using drip acclimation.

Minimum Tank Size: 20-liter 15.3 Gallons (57.92 Liters)

Care Level: Easy

Water Conditions: The water in them should be slightly alkaline (pH 7.5) with a temperature of 24 ° C.

- **Special Type:** Brackish
- **Temperature:** 69.8° F (21° C)
- **pH:** 7.5
- **General Hardness (GH):** 14

Swimming Level: Mid Tank

Compatibility / Temperament: Peaceful, Semi-aggressive, Males tend to be territorial. Only keep one per 20 gallons. Good tank mates include live-bearers and corys.

