

Keeping Hillstream Loaches for Beginners



Hillstream loaches come in different shapes and are called by various names in the trade including Butterfly loach, Borneo Sucker, Hong-Kong Plecos, Lizard Fish, Gecko Fish and others. The same names may be applied to numerous species. All species come from fast flowing streams in the wild.

Because of this, all species share the same basic needs in their environment to thrive:

- Strong current in the tank provided by powerheads.
- Cooler temperature than many “tropical” fish (68°-75°F).
- High oxygen content either by powerhead venturi or supplemental aeration.
- Proliferation of algae in their tank, encouraged by bright lighting.
- Smooth large rocks as decor over a rounded gravel substrate.

Hillstream loaches cannot tolerate a tropical community tank or a fishbowl. They generally get along well with other species of hillstreams or river fish but should not be kept in goldfish tanks.

Hillstreams eat a variety of foods such as algae wafers, shrimp pellets, frozen bloodworms and brine shrimp as well as flake foods that drift to the bottom. Many species will graze on algae and some will feed on par-boiled spinach and kale leaves.

Among good tankmates are White Clouds, several *Danio* species, and some Barbs, including Torpedo and Rosy.

An excellent article on these unique fish can be found online here:

http://www.loaches.com/hillstream_loaches.html