



**92. POND LOACH OR WEATHER FISH / THUNDERFISH / SCHLAMMPEITZGER
(*Misgurnus fossilis*)**

IDENTIFICATION: The Pond Loach / Thunderfish can reach a length of 30 cm.

HABITAT: Pond Loach / Thunderfish / Weatherfish prefer waters with muddy bottoms and thick plant growth. Due to its additional intestinal respiration, Pond Loach can survive periods of insufficient oxygenation in waters. Sometimes they move to the water surface and breath in air, which they then release again through their intestines making a clearly audible noise. Oxygen is absorbed in the intestinal epithelium. Pond Loach / Thunderfish can also survive periods during which water bodies are dry , especially in winter. They bury themselves 50 cm and deeper in the mud. Scientists claim that Pond Loach / Thunderfish are able to survive this way for more than 1 year in some type of prolonged sleep.

FOOD: Most Pond Loach / Thunderfish are active at night feeding on mollusks and insect larvae on the bottom of waters.

SPAWNING: Female Pond Loach / Thunderfish deposit their eggs from April through June on water plants. Hatching larvae have external gills, which disappear later.