

GEORGIA AQUARIUM ANIMAL FACT SHEET

Banded Archerfish

Toxotes jaculatrix

Range/Habitat

- The banded archerfish is found from India eastward to the Philippines and south to Indonesia, the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and northern Australia.
- It occurs primarily in brackish mangrove estuaries, but also penetrates adjacent rivers and small streams.
- This fish also is reported to occur near overhanging vegetation on reefs.

Physical Characteristics

- This archerfish is a small, deep-bodied fish with an upturned mouth. The lower jaw extends beyond the upper.
- Its body is silver-grey dorsally fading to silver on the underside. There are several dark splotches along the upper sides.
- It most commonly reaches an average length of about 8 inches (20 cm), but occasionally individuals as long as 12 inches (30 cm) have been reported.

Diet/Feeding

- The banded archerfish feeds at the surface during the daytime on floating debris which includes insects and plant material.
- It is renowned for its ability to “shoot down” insect prey by expelling beads of water from its mouth with considerable force.
- Its shooting range is about 60 inches (150 cm).

Conservation Status

- The banded archerfish has not been evaluated for inclusion in the IUCN Red List.

Additional Information

- The archerfish uses its jaw muscles to pump water through a tube formed by its tongue and a unique channel in the roof of its mouth. The stream of water droplets knocks its prey into the water where it is easily devoured.
- One of the most remarkable aspects of this hunting behavior is that the fish can compensate for visual refraction while looking from beneath the water surface to a target in the air above.
- Its aim is very accurate due to special adaptations in the eye which give it an unusually large area on the retina in which it can focus an image and still have the image be clear.
- The banded archerfish is popular among home aquarists.
- In some parts of its range, it is harvested and sold fresh in the marketplace.

Sources

www.fishbase.us

<http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/>

<http://www.eol.org/pages/339020>

Marine Fishes of Tropical Australia and Southeast Asia. G. Allen, pg 146