



ANGELFISHES

FAMILY: POMACANTHIDAE



DID YOU KNOW?

Over 1000 types of fish are known to make sounds including angelfish! They make a loud drumming sound when alarmed.

WHERE AT AQWA?

Search for angelfish as they glide through the warm waters of AQWA's Far North coast.

SIZE: <46CM

DIET: SPONGES, ALGAE, CORALS, TUNICATES

MAIN PREDATOR: FISH, SHARKS

HABITAT: CORAL REEF

FOUND: TROPICAL INDIAN, PACIFIC, ATLANTIC OCEANS

ANGELIC OUTLINES

Angelfish are named for how their wide fins make their silhouette look like that of an angel. Famous for their flashy colours and patterns, there are over 80 known marine species of which 30 are found in Australian waters.

Angelfish are related to butterflyfish, another colourful large-finned family on tropical reefs. The angelfish are distinguished from butterflyfish by the strong spines found on their gill covers. This also explains their scientific family name Pomacanthidae; poma is Greek meaning "cover" and akantha means "thorn".

SHELTER SEEKERS

Angelfish are not very angelic, but are instead quite territorial! They seek shelter in caves and coral crevices and can be very protective of their chosen home. Males defend their living space as well as the females they share it with, chasing other males away.

LITTLE ANGELS

Young angelfish have completely different colour patterns to the adults and they may even live on different parts of the reef.

ANGELFISH FASHION

The stunning "fashions" of angelfish are used to camouflage, confuse predators and communicate. When young, they often have bold stripes that help them to hide by distorting their outline. As they grow, the colours and patterns they develop indicate their gender and social rank. They can change gender and rank and in doing so change their "outfit"!

EMPEROR ANGELFISH

Adult (Main image) Juvenile (Insert)