



# LEAFY SEADRAGON

*PHYCODURUS EQUES*

## DID YOU KNOW?

Male seadragons are the only fish to carry eggs on their tail!

A spongy patch of their tail securely holds up to 250 bright pink eggs.

## WHERE AT AQWA?

Search for these masters of disguise in AQWA's great southern coast region. How many can you find?

**SIZE: <50CM**

**DIET: TINY CRUSTACEANS**

**MAIN PREDATOR: UNKNOWN**

**HABITAT: SEAWEED AND KELP**

**FOUND: SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA ONLY**

## DECORATED DRAGONS

Seadragons get their name from the fiery and fierce dragons of story books- although they are not fierce at all! Decorated with plant-like leafy appendages they can easily hide amongst seaweed.

## ARE THEY FISH?

Seadragons are true bony fish - just like tuna or salmon! They have gills, a bony skeleton and fins. When born, seadragons are the size of your fingernail with black and white markings. As they get older, they become a yellow-brown colour and grow up to 50cm long.

## SNAP!

Seadragons eat up to 1,000 Mysid shrimps every day! With a rapid snap of the head, these tiny shrimps are sucked into the long tubular, toothless snout before being swallowed whole.

## RISK AND REWARD!

The rippling movement of a small fin on the seadragons back slowly moves a seadragon through the water. Being slow swimmers seadragons risk not being able to escape predators. Their slow speed however, helps them to act like a drifting piece of seaweed. This combined with their plant like camouflage, stops predators from finding them in the first place. It also helps them to seek up on their food!

## WORLD EXCLUSIVE!

The cold southern waters of Australia are the only place in the world you can find seadragons in the wild. They range from Jurien Bay in WA along the southern coast to Kangaroo Island in South Australia.