



SARGASSUM FISH

HISTRIO HISTRIO

DID YOU KNOW?

This is the shallow water relative of the deep sea angler fish. They both have lures but one looks like seaweed and the other glows in the dark!

WHERE AT AQWA?

Search for these cryptic creatures in our Far North exhibit area.

SIZE: <20CM

DIET: FISH, PRAWNS

MAIN PREDATOR: BIRDS, LARGER FISH

HABITAT: OPEN OCEAN - FLOATING RAFTS OF SARGASSUM SEAWEED.

FOUND: WORLD WIDE IN TROPICAL AND SUBTROPICAL OCEANS (EXCEPT EASTERN PACIFIC)

FLOATING HOME

The sargassum fish is named after the seaweed in which it lives. It spends its whole life in the open ocean, aboard drifting rafts of seaweed.

These rafts of seaweed are a major feature of the ocean. They are a mobile shelter and moveable feast that may be as small as your hand or stretch for hundreds of kilometers.

Sargassum seaweed stays on the surface because it has balloon-like floats (about the size of a sultana) that keep it afloat.

HIDE AND SEEK

These fish are very hard to see even when they are right in front of you! Their colours perfectly match the seaweed and their skin has weed-like projections to ensure they blend in.

They creep through the sargassum with fins as moveable as fingers, and when threatened, can hop out of the water onto the top of the seaweed for extended periods of time.

LURE AND AMBUSH

They may seem small but these are the key predators of floating rafts. Thanks to their cryptic camouflage sargassum fish can remain hidden as they dangle their weedy lure, or sneak up on their food and launch a surprise attack.

The attack is jet propelled, with sargassum fish forcing water out of their gills to dart forward.

BIG MOUTH

As they dart forward to grab their food, sargassum fish open their mouth. Their mouth expands to many times its original size in a fraction of a second, creating suction and drawing prey inside.

Their mouth stretches so wide they can swallow food as big as themselves!