

Banded Archerfish (*Toxotes jaculatrix*)

The Banded Archerfish (*Toxotes jaculatrix*) is a unique and fascinating species known for its remarkable hunting technique. Here's a detailed description:

Physical Characteristics:

- ***Size***: Typically grows to about 20-30 cm (8-12 inches) in length.
- ***Body Shape***: Compressed and laterally flattened, with a deep body and a pointed head.
- ***Coloration***: Silvery-white with 4-6 distinctive black vertical bands or stripes along its sides, which give it the name "banded."
- ***Fins***: Dorsal fin is set far back, close to the tail, and the mouth is upturned.

Habitat:

- Found in brackish and freshwater environments, such as estuaries, mangroves, and rivers in Southeast Asia, Australia, and the Indo-Pacific region.
- Prefers shallow, slow-moving waters with overhanging vegetation.

Behavior:

- ***Feeding***: Famous for its ability to shoot down insects and other prey by spitting a jet of water from its mouth. It can accurately hit targets up to 1-2 meters (3-6 feet) away.
- ***Diet***: Primarily feeds on insects, small crustaceans, and other small animals.
- ***Social Structure***: Often found in small groups or schools.

Adaptations:

- ***Mouth Structure***: Its specialized mouth allows it to form a narrow groove, enabling precise water spitting.
- ***Eyes***: Large, forward-facing eyes provide excellent binocular vision, crucial for accurately targeting prey.
- ***Tolerance***: Can tolerate a range of salinities, making it adaptable to different environments.

Reproduction:

- Little is known about their breeding habits in the wild, but they are believed to spawn in brackish waters.

The Banded Archerfish is a popular species in aquariums due to its unique hunting behavior and striking appearance.