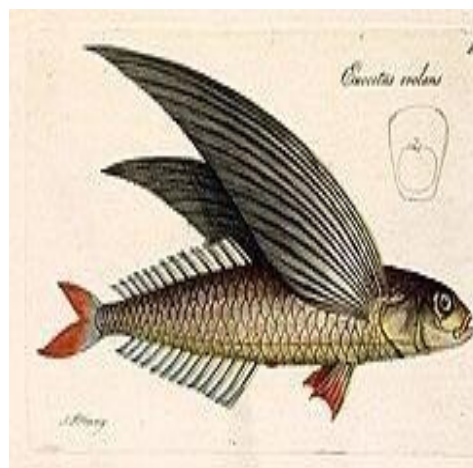


Exocoetus

Classification

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Subphylum: Vertebrata
Class: Actinopterygii
Order: Beloniformes
Family: Exocoetidae
Genus: *Exocoetus*



(Further details [link](#))

Habit and habitat

Gliding: Flying fish are famous for their ability to launch themselves out of the water and glide through the air using their large pectoral fins. This behavior is thought to be a defence mechanism against predators.

Schooling: They are typically found in schools, meaning they swim together in groups.

Geographic Range: *Exocoetus* are found in the tropical and subtropical zones of all the world's oceans. This includes the Caribbean Sea and the western Mediterranean Sea but excludes many inland seas of southeastern Asia, such as the Celebes Sea.

Ocean Zones: They are surface dwellers, living in the open ocean as well as near neritic (coastal) and inshore areas.

Characteristics

- Elongate fishes, their bodies broadly cylindrical (round or elliptical in cross-section), flattened ventrally in some species. Head short. Snout blunt, shorter than eye in all Western Central Pacific species.
- Mouth small. Jaws of equal size. Jaw teeth absent or very small. Gill rakers well developed. Upper pharyngeal bones of third gill arches close together, but not fused into a single plate.
- No spines in fins. Dorsal and anal fins set equally far back on body, their bases short and opposed.
- Pectoral fins high on sides, strikingly long, always extending beyond dorsal-fin origin. Pelvic fins abdominal in position, and greatly enlarged in many, but not all, species.
- Caudal fin deeply forked, its lower lobe longer than the upper. Lateral line low on body. Scales large, cycloid (smooth to touch), easily shed.
- Swimbladder large, extending posteriorly beyond body cavity. Young stages (to about 10 cm) quite different in appearance from adults, with pectoral fins shorter, dorsal fin often higher than in adults, colour patterns variable, and spots and bars often developed; single or paired chin barbels conspicuous in many species.
- Colour: dark above, pale below; dark colours usually iridescent blue or green in life; pectoral fins in some species with dark spots or pale stripes; dorsal fin in some species with black pigment.