

STRIPED MARLIN

Kajikia audax



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Predator Power

A group of striped marlin will work cooperatively to herd shoals of prey fish into tightly formed “bait balls.” After the bait ball is formed, they will take turns darting through it to feed.

Billfish Basics

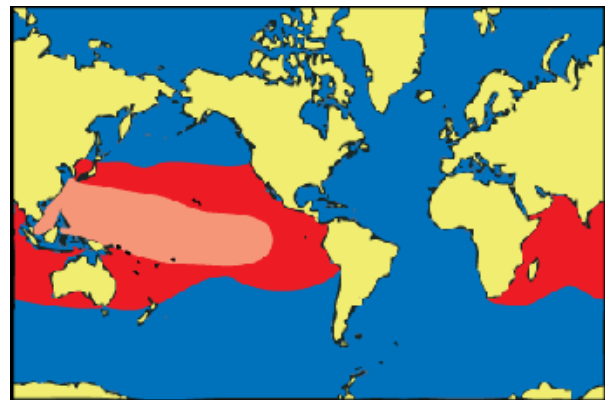
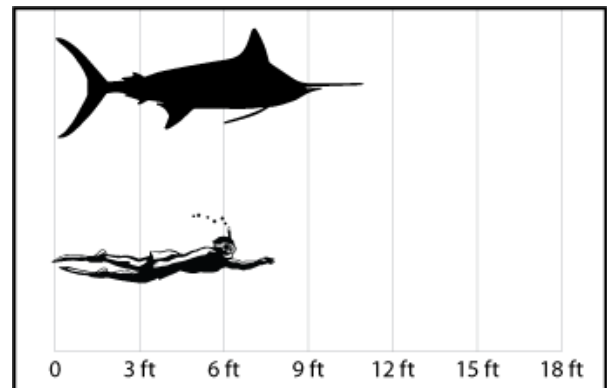
Diet: sardines, anchovies, mackerel, crustaceans and squid

Size: Up to 11 feet (3.3 m) and 494 pounds (224 kg)

Lifespan: Up to 10 years

Range and Habitat:

Striped marlin are the most widely distributed of all billfishes in the Indo-Pacific, inhabiting cooler waters (68-77 °F) than either the blue or black marlin. Their abundance increases with distance from the continental shelf, and they are usually seen close to shore only where deep drop-offs occur. Their distribution is unique among billfishes in that it forms a horseshoe-shaped pattern that is continuous along the continents of the eastern Pacific with two branches stretching west across the Pacific Ocean. Scientists have limited information on striped marlin mixing, and it could be that they prefer to stay in localized areas as opposed to undertaking longer migrations.



A Marlin can Change its Stripes

A pronounced pattern of 10 to 20 vertical body stripes running from head to tail distinguishes the striped marlin from its cousins. Typically cobalt blue in color, the stripes "light up" to phosphorescent blue to lavender when the marlin is excited, such as when it is feeding. This rapid color-change is made possible by specialized skin cells called chromatophores that are controlled by the marlin's nervous system. Scientists hypothesize that the brightly colored bars may confuse prey by breaking up the marlin's large, dark silhouette. All marlin have the ability to change their color patterns depending whether they are excited, fatigued or in courtship.

for more info, visit <http://www.takemarlinoffthemenue.org>