

Fun Fact Sheet: Flying Fish

Region

North Coast, Indian Ocean Territories

Summary

Flying fish are found in all of the oceans particularly in tropical and sub-tropical waters.

There are several species found in the waters around the Indian Ocean Territories, but identification at species level is frequently difficult and they are seldom caught by fishers. These fish are distinguished by their wing-like pectoral fins and elongated lower tail lobe. These unique features, allows them to escape predators by leaping out of the water and flying through the air for 50 m on average!

Flying fish are an important part of the diet of seabirds found on Christmas Island, especially Abbott's Booby birds. Frigate birds will eat flying fish if they are on the surface or regurgitated



from other birds, whereas Tropicbirds will eat the smaller flying fish.