

Form and Function - Mouths

Here at the Long Island Aquarium we have an amazing assortment of animals that are all extremely well adapted for the environments in which they live! The different shaped mouths of the Long Island Aquarium inhabitants are a great indicator of what they like to eat. Noticing mouth size and shape can help us understand what a wide range of animals consume!

Harlequin Filefish

As you can see the harlequin filefish has an incredibly tiny mouth which suggests it primarily consumes tiny prey. The harlequin filefish primarily feeds on small coral polyps which it is perfectly built for.



Sand Tiger Shark

Sand tiger sharks have medium-sized mouths filled with hundreds of teeth which suggests they are eating medium sized prey. These sharks eat medium sized fish like herring and menhaden. Having this many teeth suggests they are often damaged while hunting.

Red-Bellied Piranha

Red-bellied piranhas have small mouths filled with razor sharp teeth. This mouth allows these fish to readily consume small fish, small crustaceans, and even aquatic plants!



Aracari

Aracari's are a medium sized bird with a huge beak! This huge beak aids the aracari in reaching hard-to-get food in the jungle canopy! The beak is also great for crushing nuts which along with fruit are staples of the aracari's diet.