

Hoplerythrinus unitaeniatus (Yarrow)

Family: Erythrinidae (Trahiras)

Order: Characiformes (Characins and Allied Fish)

Class: Actinopterygii (Ray-finned Fish)



Fig. 1. Yarrow, *Hoplerythrinus unitaeniatus*.

[http://inpn.mnhn.fr/espece/cd_nom/461169, downloaded 1 April 2015]

TRAITS. A freshwater fish that grows to a maximum length of 25cm; males and females are alike. They have an elongated body shape with the mouth terminally positioned (Fig. 1). They have one dark lateral stripe along their body, one dorsal fin, one anal fin and paired pectoral and pelvic fins (Luna, 2015). *Hoplerythrinus unitaeniatus* is capable of aerial respiration (breathing air) as well as brachial respiration (in water, using gills) (Alkins, 1981).

DISTRIBUTION. *Hoplerythrinus unitaeniatus* is distributed throughout the swamps, creeks and flooded savannas of South and Central America (Fig. 2). It has been located in Trinidad, Guyana, Suriname, São Francisco, French Guiana, Ecuador, Brazil, and Argentina (Mol, 2012).

HABITAT AND ACTIVITY. *Hoplerythrinus unitaeniatus* is a freshwater fish that prefers waters with slow currents (Fig. 3). The yarrow can survive in temperatures of 23-27°C in a pH range of 5.6-7.8 (Luna, 2015). This fish is able to use oxygen in the air to respire, and can be

seen swimming to the surface to breathe. It can survive in water with low oxygen content and even out of water for prolonged periods of time (Mol, 2012).

FOOD AND FEEDING. This fish is an omnivore feeding on mostly aquatic invertebrates and some fish (Luna, 2015). Because of the low light intensity in the dark waters which it occupies the yarrow has relatively poor sight (Mol, 2012).

REFERENCES

- Alkins M. (1981). A Study of the Aquatic Fauna of the Aripo Savannas.
Luna, S. M. (2015). *Hoplerythrinus unitaeniatus*. Retrieved April 1, 2015, from FishBase:
<http://www.fishbase.org/summary/5305>
Merigoux S, P. D. (1989). Fish richness and species-habitat relationships in two coastal streams of. *Environmental Biology of Fishes* 51, 25-39.
Mol, J. H. A. (2012). *The Freshwater Fishes of Surinam*. Brill.

Author: Shardana Ramsamooj

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Fig. 2. Distribution of *Hoplerythrinus unitaeniatus*.

[http://www.aquamaps.org/AM_Americas/receive.php, downloaded 1 April 2015]



Fig. 3. *Hoplerythrinus unitaeniatus* in natural habitat.

[<http://www.fishbase.org/identification/SpeciesList.php?genus=Hoplerythrinus>, downloaded 1 April 2015]

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