

Scats

Scatophagus argus (Red Scat)

Selenotoca multifasciata (Silver Scat)



Left: Red Scat

Right: Silver Scat



Natural Range

Scat species are found mainly around the northern coasts of Australia in estuaries and mangroves. They can also be found in similar habitats throughout the Asia-Pacific region in countries from India to Tahiti.

Maximum Size and Longevity

Both Red and Silver Scats can grow to about 35cm, sometimes even larger in the wild. They can live anywhere between 10 and 15 years old.

Water Quality

Scats prefer hard, alkaline to brackish water conditions.

- Temperature: 20°C - 30°C.
- pH: 7.5—8.2
- General Hardness: 250—300 ppm or higher.

Feeding

Scats are omnivores and will eat anything provided such as beef heart, dry foods, and vegetable matter such as spinach or algae. They also thrive on small crustaceans and aquatic insects. Scats also readily eat frozen foods as well as pellets and flake.

Compatibility

These fish are a very versatile fish that will mix with most species that inhabit similar water conditions. They are ideally suited to brackish community tanks with species such as; Archerfish, Monos, other Scats and Madagascar Rainbows. Avoid keeping anything smaller than their mouth in the tank as they can be a predatory fish.

Colour and Varieties

There are a few different types of scats but only the Red and Silver regularly enter fresh water.

Red Scat: the red scat is probably the most popular of the scats because of its colours. They are a round fish with a tall body and have spiky dorsal fins that are said to have a small amount of toxins in them. They have vertical lines that run down the body that are a red to ruby colour when they are younger as the mature they lose these lines and spots become more predominant.

Silver Scat: They are a round fish with a tall body and have spiky dorsal fins that are said to have a small amount of toxins in them. They have vertical lines that run half way down the body that are black the rest of the body is covered in spots. As the fish matures they will lose the stripes and they will be replaced with spots.

Sexing

There are no physical external differences between the male and females and they have not been bred in captivity to date.

General Information

The name “scatophagus” actually means “the dung eater” because of their feeding habits of eating just about anything. Scats are best kept in groups especially when young when the schooling instinct is greatest. Care should be taken if handling as scats as the spines can inflict painful wounds.