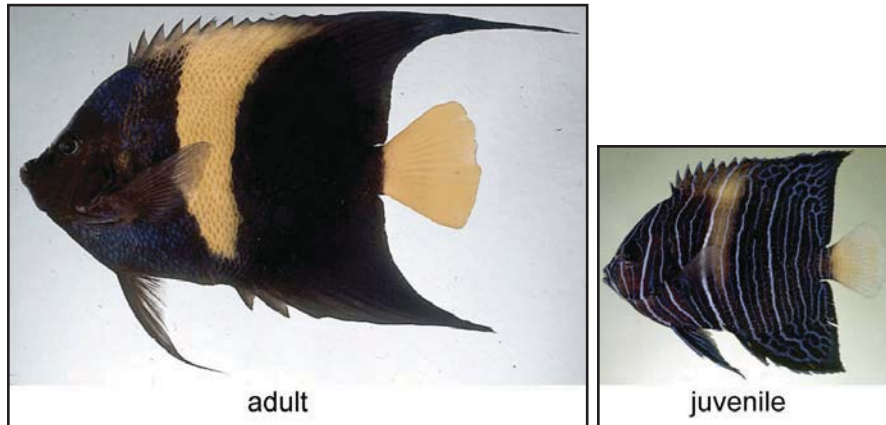


***Pomacanthus asfur* (Forsskål 1775)**  
**Arabian Angelfish**



Photos by J. Randall, Bishop Museum

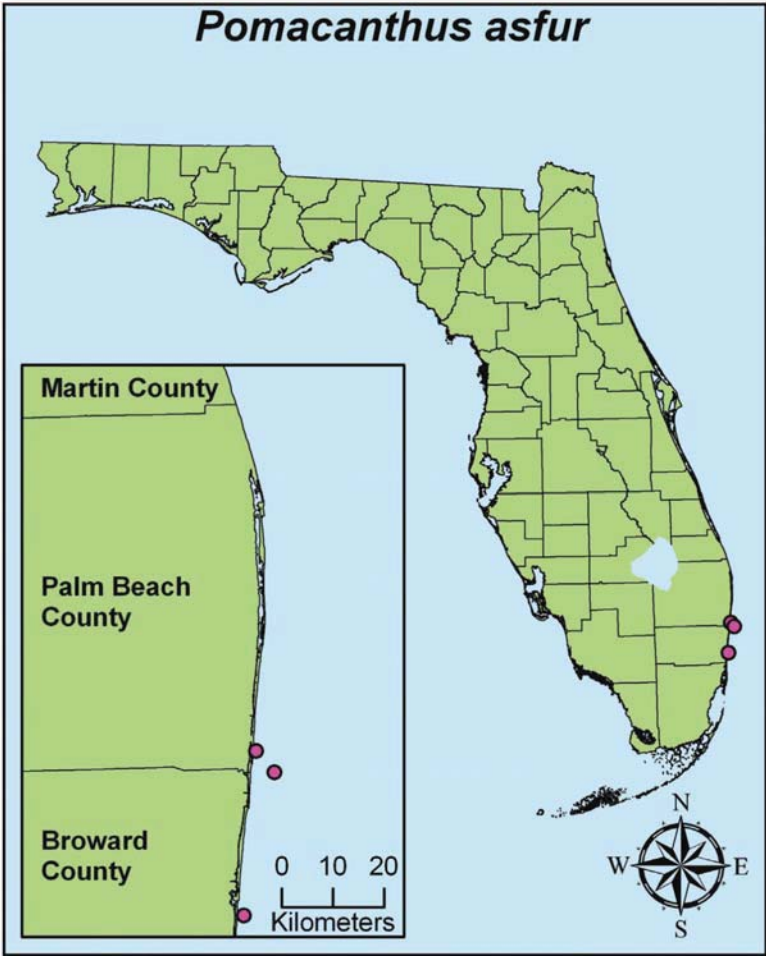
**Identification:** The body of the adult Arabian Angelfish is dark overall with a broad, vertical yellow marking along the middle of the body that resembles a crescent. The dorsal and anal fins are dark and end in filaments that extend beyond the caudal fin; the caudal fin is solid yellow. Juvenile Arabian Angelfish look distinctly different from the adults. The body of juveniles is blue-black with a series of narrow white and pale-blue bars; there are usually three distinct white bars. Grows to 40 cm TL. Dorsal fin XII (19-20); anal fin III (18-20); pectoral rays 17 or 18. From Randall (1983) and Allen et al. (1998).

**Similar Species:** The Rock Beauty (*Holacanthus tricolor*) has a yellow head and tail with black body. Juvenile Queen Angelfish (*Holacanthus ciliaris*) and Blue Angelfish (*Holacanthus bermudensis*) have bright blue body bars. Juvenile French Angelfish (*Holacanthus paru*) and Gray Angelfish (*Holacanthus arcuatus*) have bright yellow body bars on black body.

**Native Range:** Western Indian Ocean, from the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden south to Zanzibar (Randall 1983; Allen et al. 1998).

**Ecology:** In their native habitat, Arabian Angelfish live along shallow (3 to 15 m depth), protected shoreline reefs with a mix of hard and soft corals. The species has been noted as shy, and not easy to approach. Generally, it is observed near caves or crevices along the reef, and rarely ventures far from these refugia. Feeds primarily on sponges and tunicates. From Allen et al. (1998).

**Nonindigenous Occurrences:** There is a vague record of the occurrence of the species in south Florida offshore Broward and Palm Beach counties (Courtenay 1995). It was also observed in 2001 off Dania.



Pomacanthidae (angelfishes)