



The ultimate in 'hosted' angling adventures throughout the Amazon

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## Amazon Species Watch Piraiba

### Scientific Classification

Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Chordata
Class:	Actinopterygii
Order:	Siluriformes
Family:	Pimelodidae
Genus:	<b>Brachyplatystoma</b>
Species:	<b>B. filamentosum</b>

B. filamentosum are the largest of the Amazon catfish, commonly called Piraiba, they also go under other names such as Lau Lau, Freshwater Shark, or when juvenile, "Filhote". Their distribution is widespread with the region, Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Guyana, within the Amazon, Orinoco, and Essequibo drainages. Generally tending to frequent locations in which a combination of water movement, depth and food availability makes life relatively easy for them, these large, opportunistic carnivores primarily inhabit deep holes in lotic environments. Several species of Brachyplatystoma as well as other Pimelodidae resemble Piraiba, however none reach similar size.

Usually their body is relatively uniform and free of any clearly discernible markings. Their lateral body is a silver / grey with a slightly darker dorsal fin. The abdomen is pale / white and there are often reddish markings on their lips



Piraiba can grow to an enormous size, the photo on the left displays one taken in Roraima, Brazil. Whilst it is tragic to see such a loss, its important to understand that fish such as this provide a valuable source of food to the locals. It was reported that this one exceeded 500lb. On the right, Steve is with a 200lb+ specimen, and check out the dorsal fin!! No wonder they are called the freshwater shark. Piraiba have incredible strength, are athletic and readily venture into open water with blistering runs, often requiring fast pursuit to avoid 'spool stripping'.



### Catching Piraiba



Use of either 'live' or 'dead' bait' are effective and proven techniques. For both, don't be put off by the size of bait you will use, large Piraiba have huge mouths and can easily swallow in whole fish or chunks of 'cut-bait' at 5lb+, but you will need to get the bait down as quickly as possible and then hold it there. General tackle, a good 30lb-60lb boat rod (6ft 6in – 7ft 6in), coupled with either a heavy-duty multiplier or 12000min baitrunner. Ensure you have at least 200yds of 100lb min braid spooled up. Splice a 10ft-15ft length of 100lb mono/fluoro to the braid (FG knot perfect). A running lead system works well, with a 4oz-5oz lead on a run ring which should pass easily over any knots between the braid and leader. (See our catfishing tips publication)

At the business end, a 6/0 to 10/0 'J' hook or even better a 'circle' hook. If piranhas are a problem, use 100lb single strand wire for the hooklink (haywire twist perfect). If no piranha, you may want to use braid, if so, nothing less than 200lb. Make sure your hooks are strong and of high quality, along with swivels, which should be rated at 120lb – 150lb. Basically, treat this as you would for catfishing in the UK or EU, but on steroids!!

