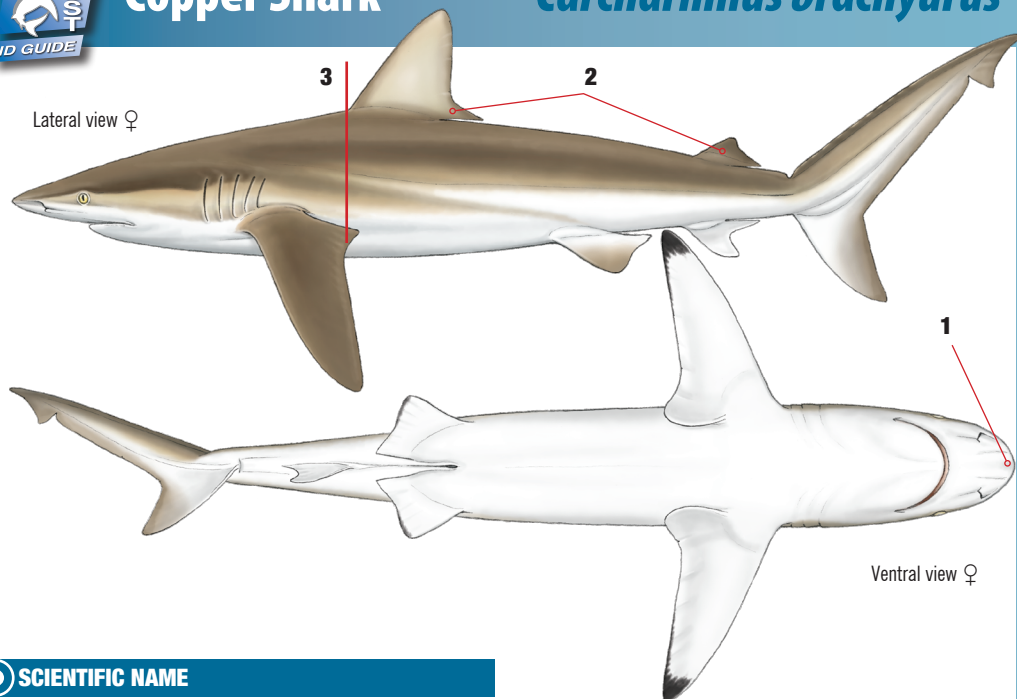


Copper Shark

Carcharhinus brachyurus



Lateral view ♀

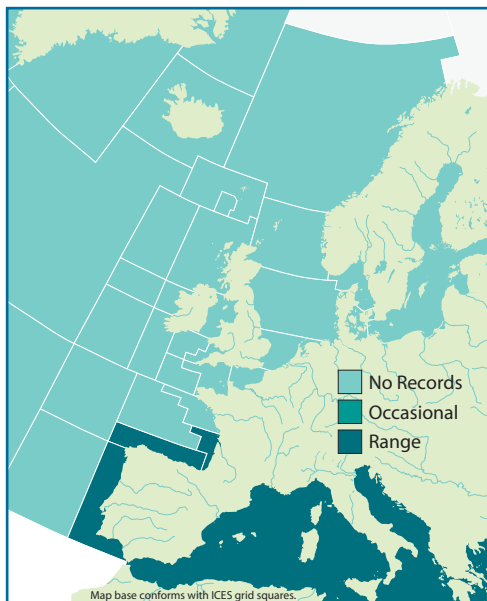
Ventral view ♀

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Carcharhinus brachyurus (Günther, 1870).

DISTRIBUTION

Almost circumglobal in warm temperate and subtropical waters. East Atlantic from France to Morocco, Guinea, Namibia to South Africa and the Mediterranean Seaⁱ.



COMMON NAME

COPPER SHARK, Narrowtooth Shark, Bronze Whaler, Bronze Shark, Cocktail Shark, New Zealand Whaler, Requin Cuivre (Fr), Tiburón Cobrizo (Es).

IDENTIFICATION

- 1** Bluntly pointed broad snout.
- 2** Small dorsal fins with short rear tips.
- 3** First dorsal fin originates over pectoral fin rear tips.

COLOUR

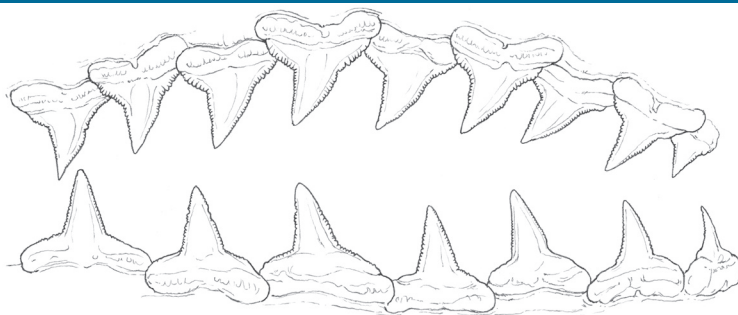
- Bronze grey dorsally.
- White ventrally.
- No markings on fins^{iv}.

BIOLOGY AND SIZE

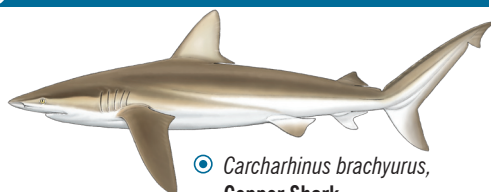
- Born: 59–70cm. Mature: <240cm ♂, 200–229cm ♀. Max TL: 294cm^{iv}.
- Gestation thought to last at least 12 months. 13–24 pups born in each litter^{iv}.
- Feeds on a wide variety of teleost fish, elasmobranchs, molluscs and cephalopods as well as benthic crustaceansⁱⁱ.

TEETH

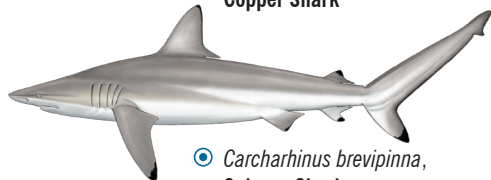
- 28–32 narrow, serrated teeth with bent cusps in upper jaw.
- 28–30 narrow, serrated teeth with semi-erect cusps in lower jaw.
- No cusplets^{iv}.



SIMILAR SPECIES



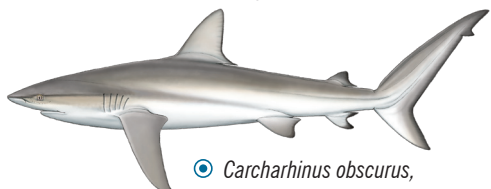
Carcharhinus brachyurus,
Copper Shark



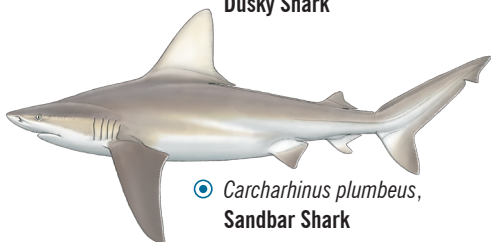
Carcharhinus brevipinna,
Spinner Shark



Carcharhinus falciformis,
Silky Shark



Carcharhinus obscurus,
Dusky Shark



Carcharhinus plumbeus,
Sandbar Shark

HABITAT

- Surface to at least 100m. Has been recorded in shallow estuaries and brackish waterⁱⁱ.
- Unique among *Carcharhinus* spp. in preferring temperate waters over tropicalⁱⁱⁱ.
- Migrate to follow food supplies, notably the sardine run along the coasts of southern Africaⁱⁱ.

CONSERVATION STATUS

- Large shark with life history traits which make it vulnerable to overfishing. Fished across its range and killed as a pest species around Australia. Population trends are poorly understoodⁱⁱ.
- Red List status:** Near Threatened (2003).

COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE

- Taken primarily as bycatch in gillnet and longline fisheries targeting teleost fish and other sharks.
- Targeted across some of its range (South Africa, Australasia, East Asia, South America).
- Targeted by recreational anglers, particularly off New Zealand, Australia and South Africaⁱⁱ.

HANDLING

- Handle with care.
- Sharp teeth.
- Abrasive skin.

REFERENCES

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