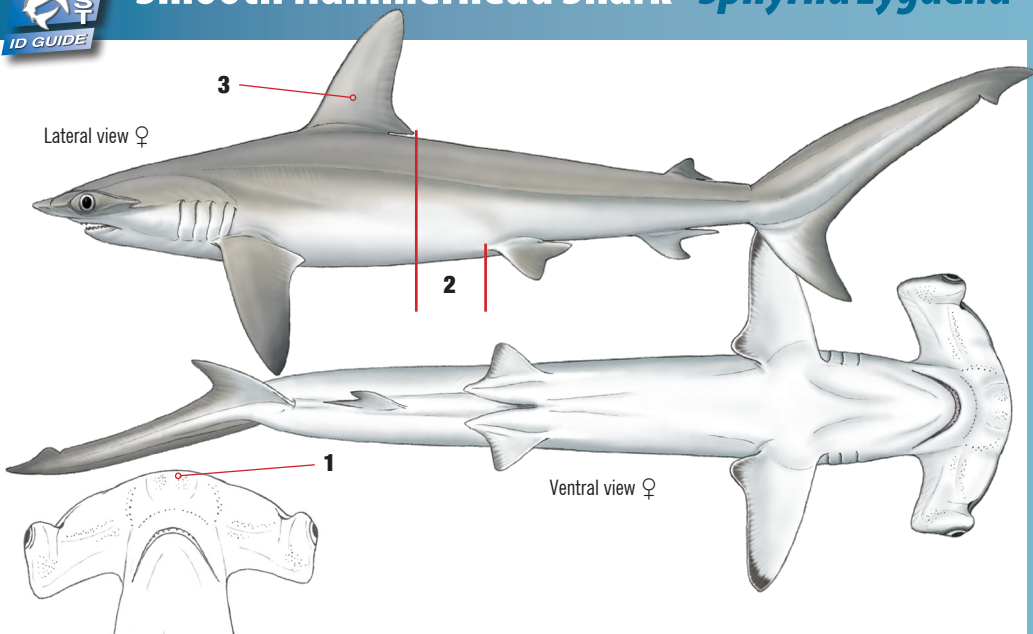


Smooth Hammerhead Shark *Sphyrna zygaena*

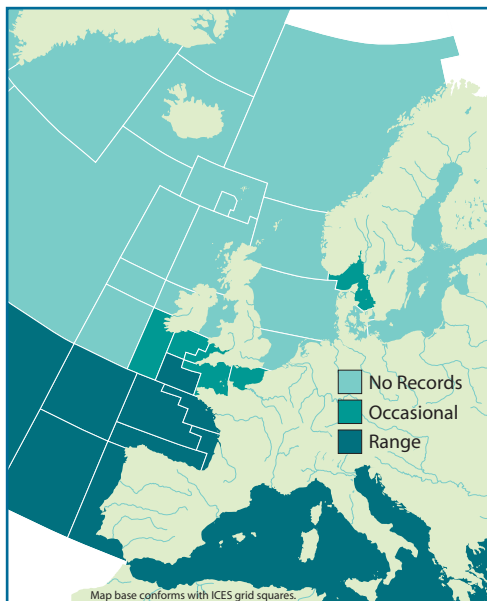


SCIENTIFIC NAME

Sphyrna zygaena (Linnaeus 1758).

DISTRIBUTION

Circumglobal in tropical and temperate seas. East Atlantic from the southern British Isles to the Ivory Coast, including the Mediterranean Seaⁱ. Single western Baltic record.



COMMON NAME

SMOOTH HAMMERHEAD SHARK, Common Hammerhead Shark, Round Headed Hammerhead Shark, Requin-Marteau Commun (Fr), Cornuda Cruz (Es).

IDENTIFICATION

- 1 Broad cephalofoil with no median indentation.
- 2 First dorsal fin in front of pelvic fins.
- 3 Moderately sized first dorsal finⁱⁱⁱ.

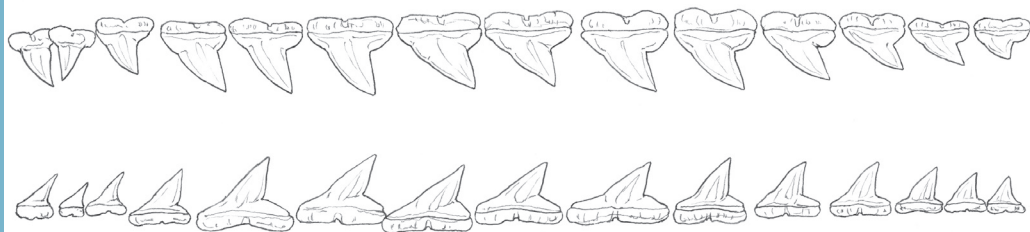
COLOUR

- Dark olive to grey brown dorsally.
- Ventrally white.
- May have dark edged pectoral finsⁱ.

BIOLOGY AND SIZE

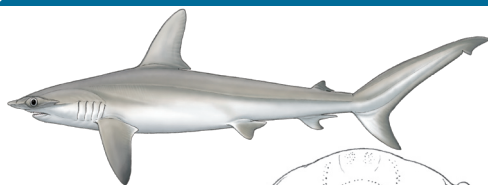
- Born: 50cm. Mature: 270cm ♀, 210–250cm ♂. Max TL: 500cmⁱ.
- Litters of 20–40 pups have been recorded after gestation periods of 10–11 monthsⁱ.
- Primarily a piscivore feeding on teleost fish and other elasmobranchsⁱ. Cephalopods and crustaceans are also important prey itemsⁱⁱⁱ.

TEETH

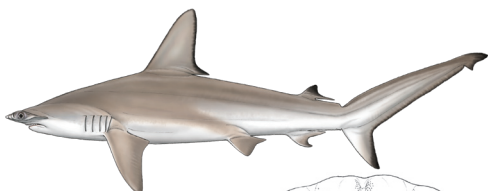


- Very broad cusps.
- Smooth or weakly serrated edgesⁱⁱ.

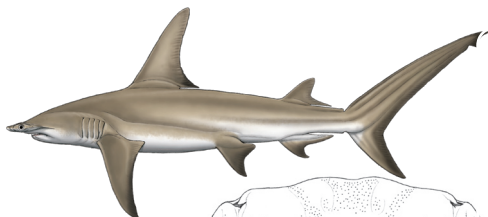
SIMILAR SPECIES



- Sphyrna zygaena* **Smooth Hammerhead Shark**



- Sphyrna lewini*, **Scalloped Hammerhead Shark**



- Sphyrna mokarran*, **Great Hammerhead Shark**

HABITAT

- Inshore and shelf waters from the surface to at least 20m, prefer water <20m.
- Migrate south in winter and north in summer. Adults may form small groups during migrations, juveniles form enormous schools.
- Have been two reports of the species from freshwaterⁱⁱ.

CONSERVATION STATUS

- Populations are poorly understood but are likely to have been significantly impacted by fishing. Hammerhead shark populations have declined greatly in the Mediterranean^{iv}.
- Red List status:** Near Threatened (2000).

COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE

- No targeted fishery but taken as bycatch in longline, handline and trawl fisheries across its range^{iv}.
- Fins are very valuable, any sharks taken as bycatch are likely to be retained.
- Meat is low quality but can be eaten. Hides can be used for leather, liver for oil and carcasses for fishmealⁱⁱⁱ.

HANDLING

- Handle with care.
- Large, powerful shark.
- Sharp teeth and abrasive skin.

REFERENCES

- Bester, C; Unknown. FLMNH.
- Casper, B. M. *et al*; 2005. IUCN Red List.
- Compagno, L. J. V; 1984. FAO.
- Ferretti, F. *et al*; 2008. Conservation Biology.