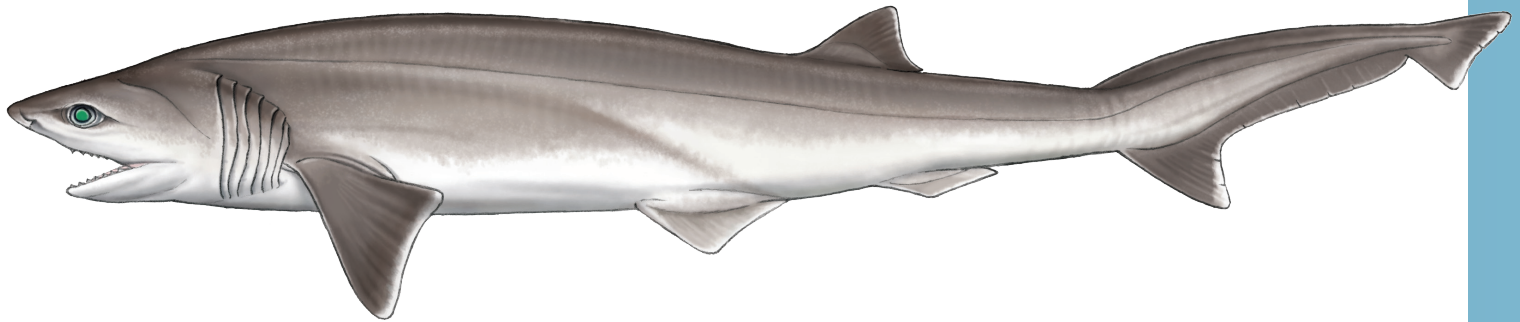
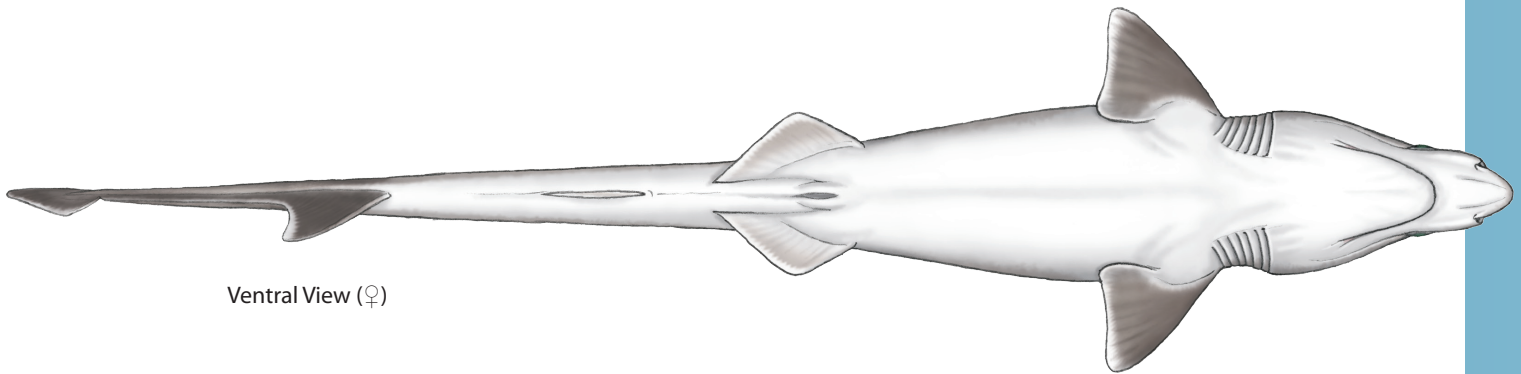


Lateral View (♀)



Ventral View (♀)



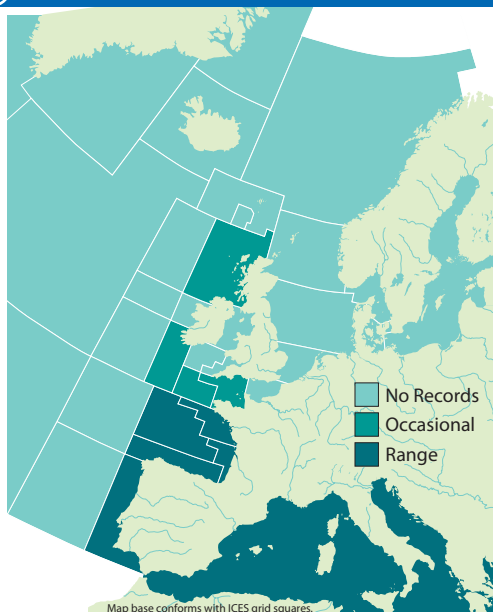
COMMON NAMES

Sharpnose Sevengill Shark, One-Finned Shark, Perlon Shark, Sevengill Cow Shark, Sevengilled Mediterranean Shark, Snouted Sevengill Shark, Slender Sevengill Shark, Requin Perlon (Fr), Cañabota Bocadulce (Es).

SYNONYMS

Heptranchias cinereus (Gmelin 1789), *Squalus cinereus* (Gmelin 1789), *Notidanus cinereus* (Gmelin 1789), *Heptranchus angio* (Costa 1857), *Heptranchias angio* (Costa 1857), *Notidanus cinereus aetatis* (Bellotti 1878), *Notidanus cinereus pristiurus* (Bellotti 1878), *Heptranchias deani* (Jordan & Starks 1901), *Heptranchias dakini* (Whitley 1931).

DISTRIBUTION



An extremely wide ranging species in tropical and temperate seas, absent only from the eastern North Pacific. It has only been recorded in British waters twice, once from southern Cornwall and once from southern Ireland (Henderson and Williams, 2001).

APPEARANCE

- Moderately small shark with a slender body and a sharply pointed snout.
- Seven gill slits, unique in the northeast Atlantic.
- Single dorsal fin with straight or slightly convex leading edge set behind the pelvic fins.
- Small, weakly curved pectoral fins.
- Small pelvic fins and anal fin.
- Long dorsal lobe of caudal fin, ventral lobe with strong sub terminal notch.
- Brown-grey colouration on the dorsal surface.
- Lighter ventrally.
- Fins may have paler posterior margins.
- Juveniles have dark blotches, present but faded in adults.

A very distinctive species, the Sharpnose Sevengill Shark is slender and streamline with a sharply pointed snout. On the sides of the head there are seven large gills, a feature unique in the northeast Atlantic. It has large eyes which are bright green in live specimens. Underneath the snout the mouth is long and narrow containing distinctive teeth (Bester, Unknown).

There is only one dorsal fin which is small and set well back on the body behind the pelvic fins. The pectoral fins are small and weakly curved. The pelvic and anal fins are also tiny. The caudal fin has an enlarged upper lobe with a strong terminal lobe. The ventral lobe has a large terminal notch (Bester, Unknown).

Dorsally the colour can vary from grey to olive brown. The posterior margins of the fins can be pale. There is normally a pattern of faint, dark blotches. Juveniles have much stronger dark margins. Ventrally it is paler to white (Bester, Unknown).

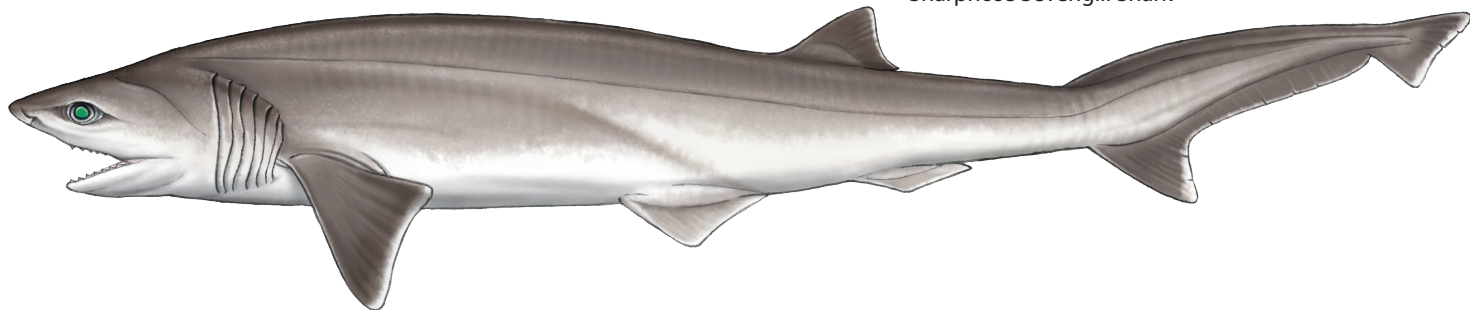
SIMILAR SPECIES

Hexanchus griseus, Bluntnose Sixgill Shark

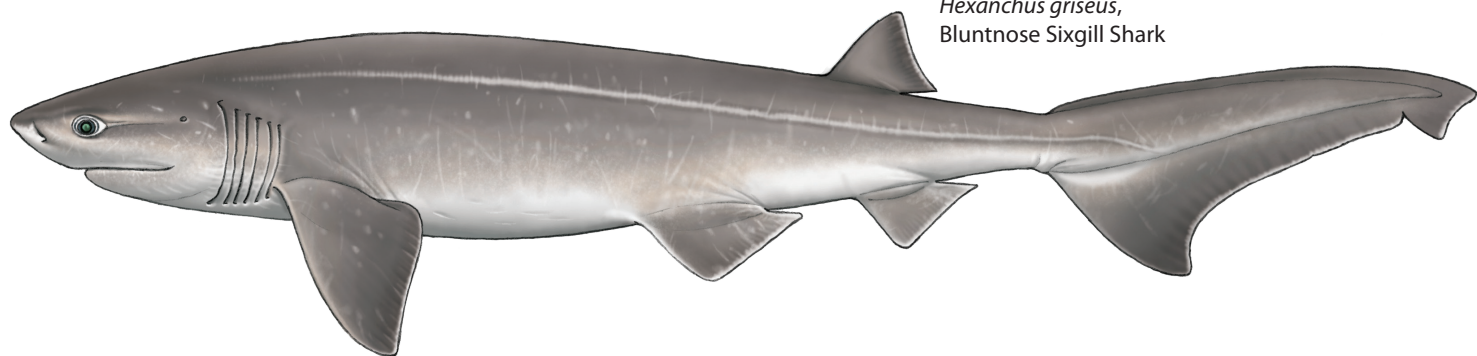
Hexanchus nakamurai, Bigeye Sixgill Shark

Chlamydoselachus anguineus, Frilled Shark

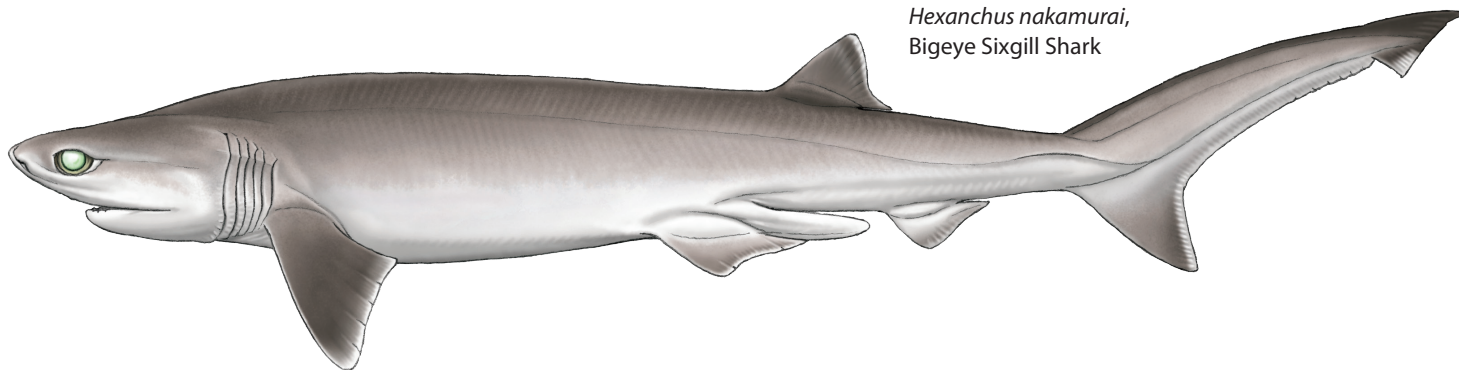
Heptranchias perlo,
Sharpnose Sevengill Shark



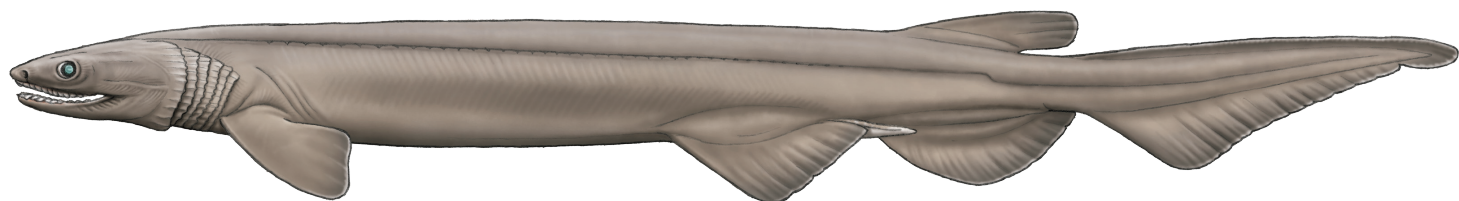
Hexanchus griseus,
Bluntnose Sixgill Shark



Hexanchus nakamurai,
Bigeye Sixgill Shark



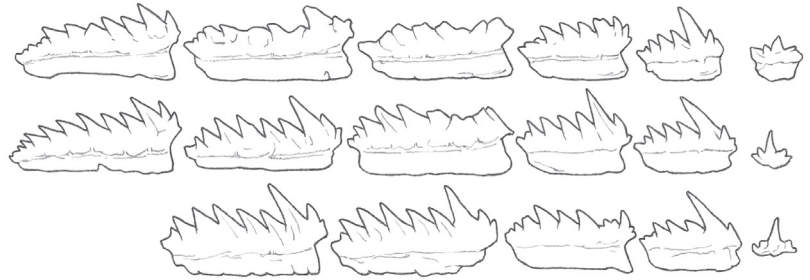
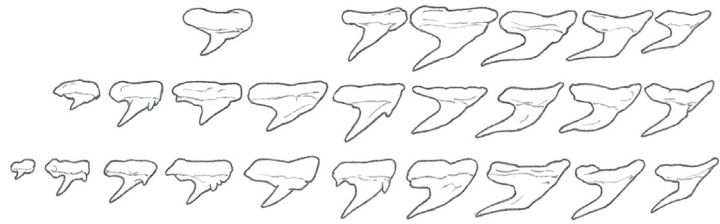
Chlamydoselachus anguineus,
Frilled Shark



(Not to scale)

TEETH

The first three or four teeth in the upper jaw are narrow with a hook-like cusp and small lateral cusps. All the subsequent teeth have one or two small cusps. The teeth in the lower jaw are broad and comb-shaped with the exception of a small symmetrical tooth at the symphysis. There are 9-11 teeth on each side of the upper jaw and five teeth each side of the symphyseal tooth in the lower jaw (Bester, Unknown).



ECOLOGY AND BIOLOGY

HABITAT

A deepwater species, the Sharpnose Sevengill Shark is usually found on or near the bottom to 1,000m. However, it has been recorded in open water as shallow as 27m (Bester, Unknown). It is most commonly taken between 300 and 600m with possible aggregations around features such as seamounts (Paul and Fowler, 2003).

EGGCASE

N/A

DIET

The Sharpnose Sevengill Shark is a voracious generalist predator known to feed on a wide variety of prey. These include marine invertebrates such as shrimp, crabs, lobsters, squid and cuttlefish, bony fish such as hake and other, smaller elasmobranchs. It feeds more actively at night (Bester, Unknown).

REPRODUCTION

Males mature between 75 and 85cm in length, females slightly larger between 90 and 105cm. It is an ovoviviparous species and there can be 6-20 young in each litter. These pups are born measuring around 25cm in length (Paul and Fowler, 2003).

COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE

The Sharpnose Sevengill Shark is sometimes caught in significant numbers by bottom and mid-water trawl and longline fisheries. It is of little commercial importance although its meat is appreciated throughout much of its range. The carcass is likely processed for fishmeal (Paul and Fowler, 2003).

THREATS, CONSERVATION, LEGISLATION

The population status of the Sharpnose Sevengill Shark is difficult to ascertain as it is a wide ranging, relatively uncommon species. It is likely that populations have decreased in areas where deepwater fishing effort has been high in recent decades but no species specific catch data is available (Paul and Fowler, 2003). There are currently no management measures in place for the species.

IUCN RED LIST ASSESSMENT

Near Threatened (2003).

HANDLING AND THORN ARRANGEMENT

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

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PAUL, L., FOWLER, S. 2003. *Heptranchias perlo*. In: IUCN 2008. 2008 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. www.iucnredlist.org

Text: Richard Hurst.
Illustrations: Marc Dando.

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