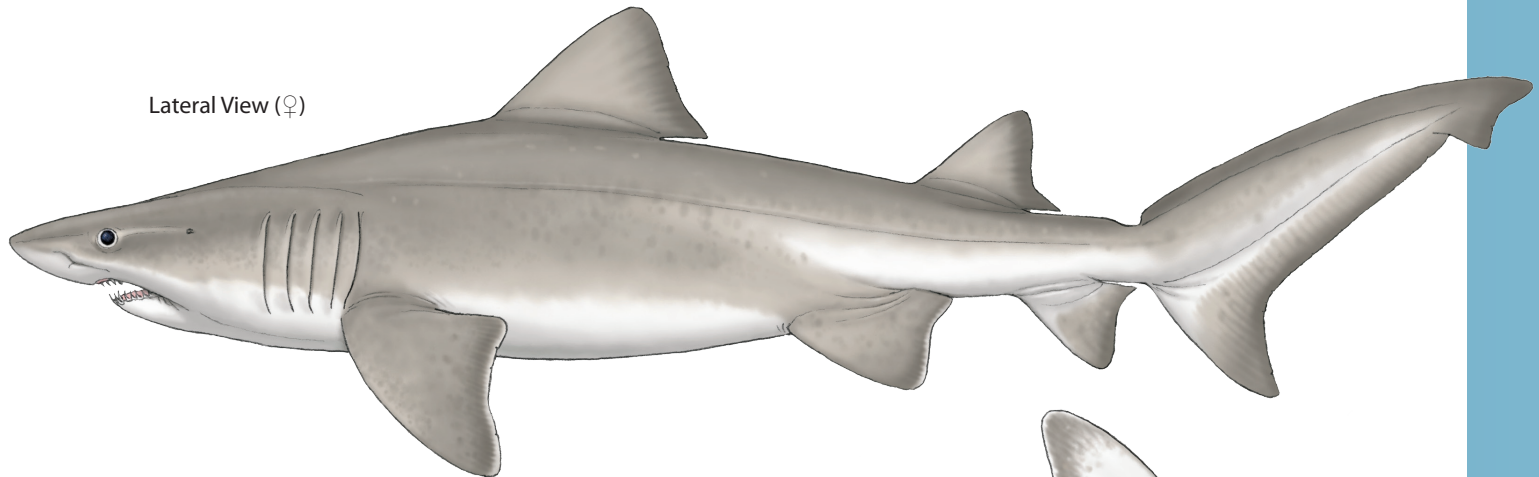
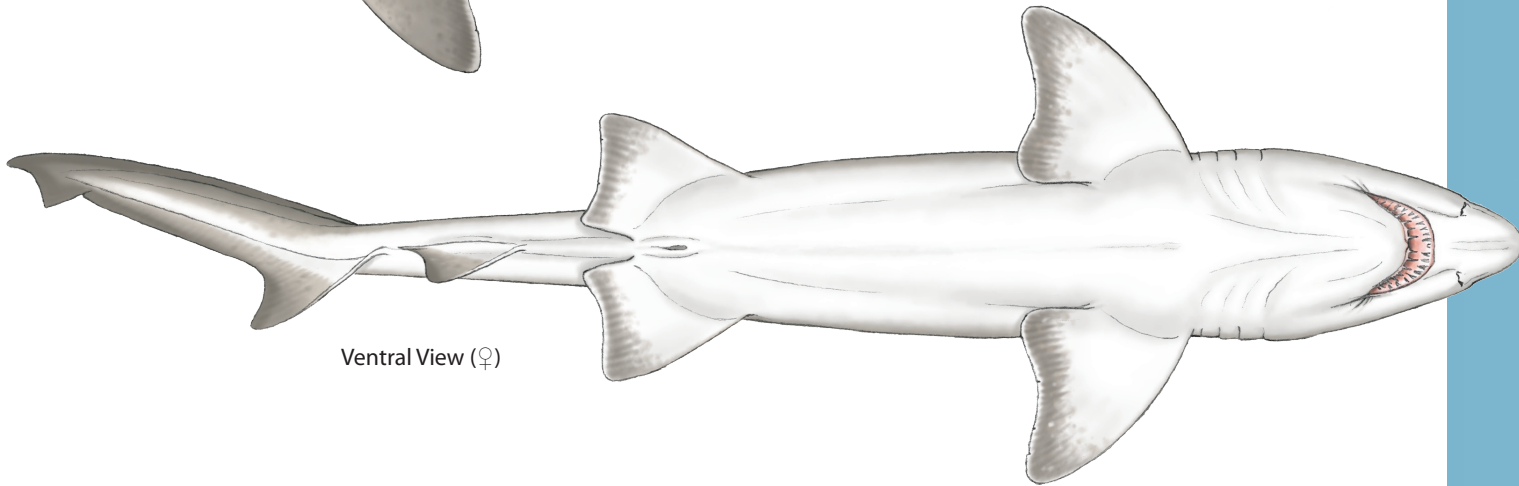


Lateral View (♀)



Ventral View (♀)



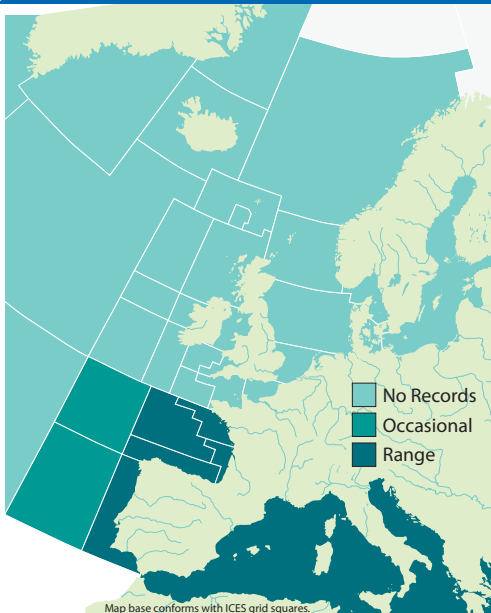
COMMON NAMES

Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark, Raggedtooth Shark, Herbst's Nurse Shark, Requin Féroce (Fr), Solrayo (Es).

SYNONYMS

Squalus ferox (Risso, 1810), *Carcharias ferox* (Risso, 1826), *Odontaspis herbsti* (Whitley, 1950).

DISTRIBUTION



The Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark is possibly a circumglobal species in warm-temperate and tropical waters but is patchily distributed. In the eastern North Atlantic it is known from Madeira, Morocco, Western Sahara, the Bay of Biscay and the Mediterranean Sea (Algeria, Italy, Adriatic, Lebanon) (Compagno, 2001).

APPEARANCE

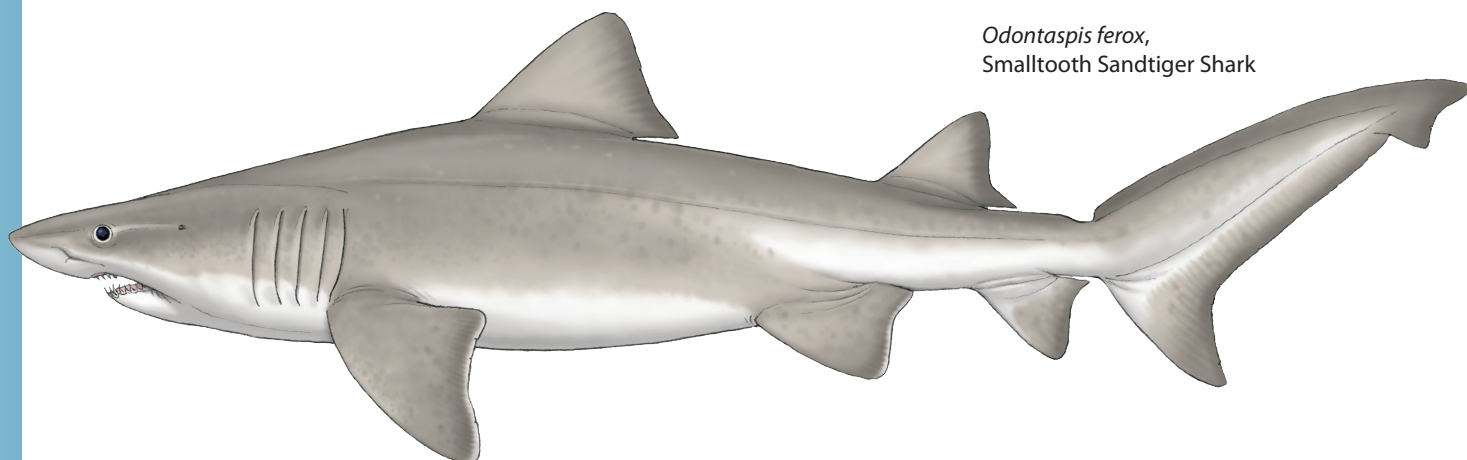
- Long, bulbously conical snout.
- Moderately large eyes.
- Mouth long, extending behind eyes.
- First dorsal fin closer to pectoral than pelvic fins.
- Pectoral fins angular.
- Anal, pelvic and second dorsal fins smaller than first dorsal fin.
- Caudal fin asymmetrical but with long ventral lobe.
- Medium grey or grey brown dorsally.
- Usually lighter ventrally.
- Dark spots sometimes scattered on body.

A large shark reaching 410cm total length, the Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark is similar in appearance to the Sandtiger Shark, *Carcharias taurus*. It has a long, bulbously conical snout, moderately large eyes and a long mouth extending behind the eyes. Its first dorsal fin is closer to the pectoral fins than the pelvic. The pectoral fins are broad based and angular. The second dorsal, pelvic and anal fins are smaller than the first dorsal fin but are still relatively large. The caudal fin is asymmetrical but with a long ventral lobe. The dorsal colouration is grey or grey brown, usually fading ventrally. Dark spots may be scattered across the body (Compagno, 2001).

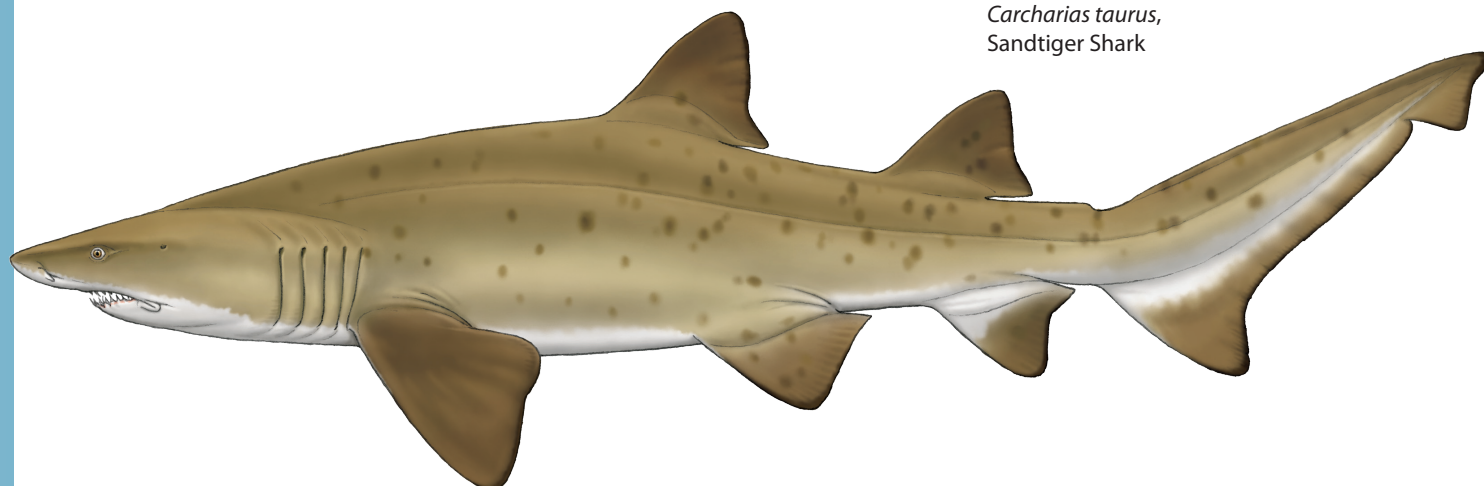
SIMILAR SPECIES

Carcharias taurus, Sandtiger Shark

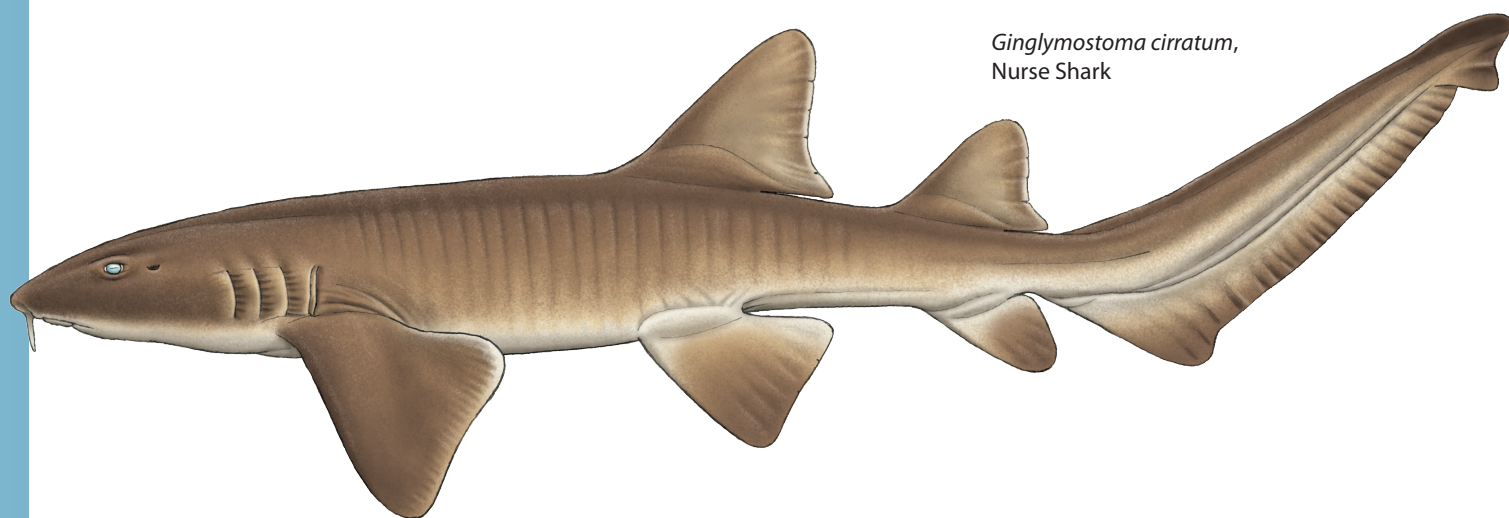
Ginglymostoma cirratum, Nurse Shark



Odontaspis ferox,
Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark



Carcharias taurus,
Sandtiger Shark

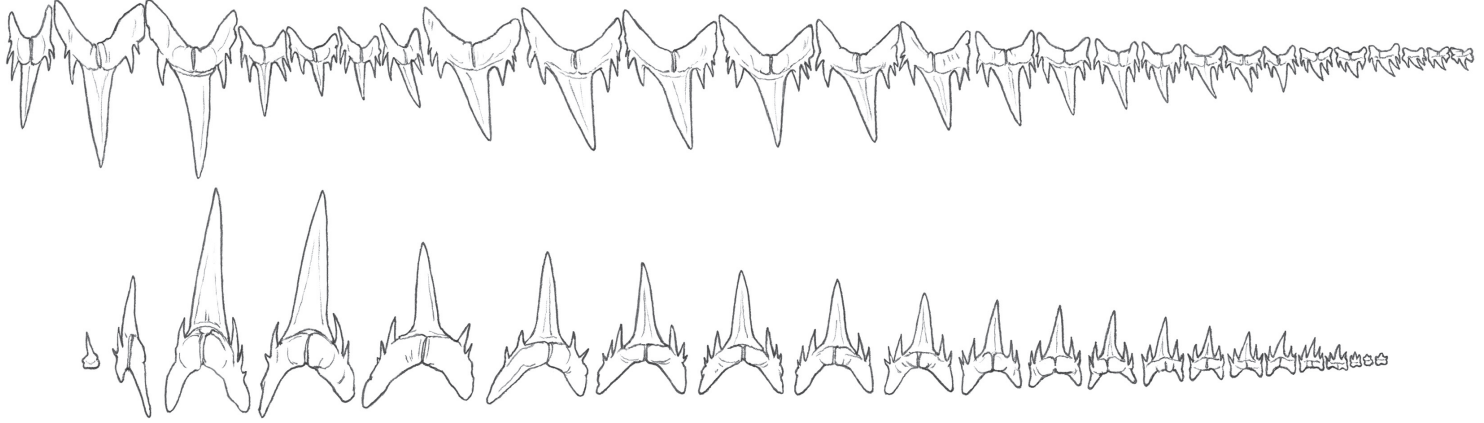


Ginglymostoma cirratum,
Nurse Shark

(Not to scale)

TEETH

The teeth are large with prominent narrow cusps and two or more pairs of lateral cusplets. The front teeth in the upper jaw are separated from the rear teeth by 2–5 rows of small intermediate teeth (Compagno, 2001).



ECOLOGY AND BIOLOGY

HABITAT

Primarily a demersal species, the Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark is normally found in deep waters along continental shelves and upper slopes to at least 850m. It is occasionally found in shallow water and has been filmed at 20m in the Indian Ocean. There are three records in open, pelagic waters of the Indian Ocean. It can be seen solitarily or forming small aggregations (Pollard *et al.*, 2003).

EGGCASE

N/A

DIET

Examined stomachs from the Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark have contained small bony fish, squid and shrimp. Its dentition suggests it takes smaller, less active and softer-bodied prey than the similar Sandtiger Shark, *Carcharias taurus* (Compagno, 2001).

REPRODUCTION

Female Smalltooth Sandtiger Sharks mature at around 364cm, males at around 275cm. Little is known of its reproduction other than it is an ovoviparous species and the size at birth is above 105cm. Embryos may be nourished through oophagy but it is not known if it practices uterine cannibalism to the same extent as the Sandtiger Shark, *Carcharias taurus* (Compagno, 2001).

COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE

The Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark is fished in the Mediterranean and around Japan with gill nets, line gear and bottom trawls for its hide, liver oil and, to a lesser extent, its flesh. It is primarily taken as bycatch but can be targeted where it forms aggregations (Compagno, 2001)

THREATS, CONSERVATION, LEGISLATION

Despite its worldwide distribution, populations of the Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark are fragmented and it may be naturally rare. Observations of shallow water aggregations may make the species more vulnerable to fisheries than previously thought and potentially vulnerable to habitat destruction. Off the east coast of Australia, fisheries observers have recorded declines of at least 50%, a situation thought to be similar across Australian and New Zealand waters. Although population data is lacking for the Mediterranean and northeast Atlantic, similar declines are inferred (Pollard *et al.*, 2003).

IUCN RED LIST ASSESSMENT

Data Deficient (2003).

HANDLING AND THORN ARRANGEMENT

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

REFERENCES

COMPAGNO, L. J. V. 2001. Sharks of the World: An Annotated and Illustrated Catalogue of Shark Species Known to Date. Volume 2. Bullhead, Mackerel and Carpet Sharks (Heterodontiformes, Lamniformes and Orectolobiformes). FAO. Rome, Italy.

POLLARD, D., GORDON, I., WILLIAMS, S., FLAHERTY, A., FERGUSON, I. K. 2003. *Odontaspis ferox*. In: IUCN 2009. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2009.1. www.iucnredlist.org.

Text: Richard Hurst.
Illustrations: Marc Dando.

Citation

Shark Trust; 2010. An Illustrated Compendium of Sharks, Skates, Rays and Chimaera. Chapter 1: The British Isles and Northeast Atlantic. Part 2: Sharks.

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