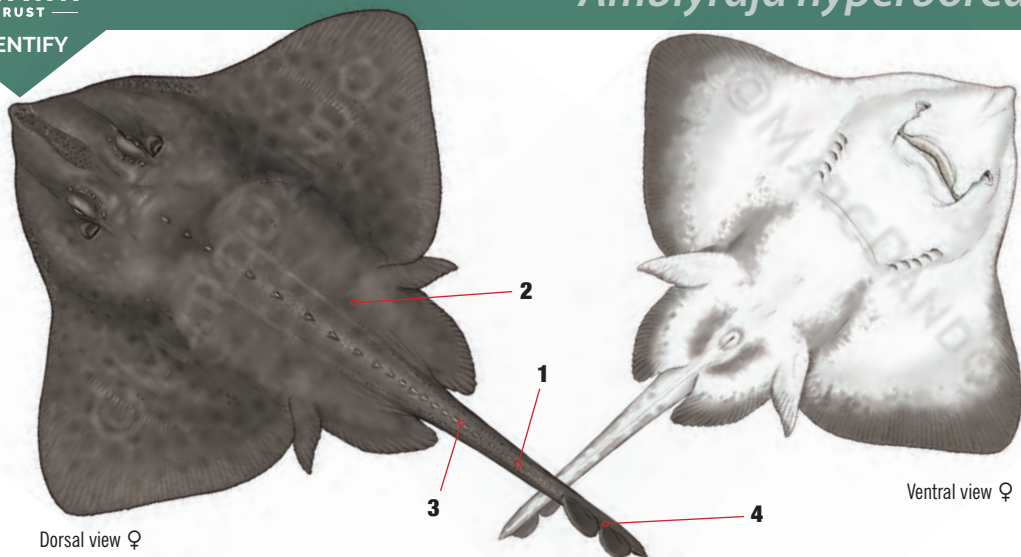


ARCTIC SKATE

Amblyraja hyperborea



SCIENTIFIC NAME

Amblyraja hyperborea (Collett, 1879)

DISTRIBUTION

Arctic and subarctic waters of the North Atlantic. Northeast Atlantic from Iceland to north coast of Norway incl. Faroe Islands, north of the Shetland Islands and occasionally the northern Rockall Trough. Found in the Northwest Atlantic in the Davis Strait between Canada and Greenland.¹⁻⁴

COMMON NAMES

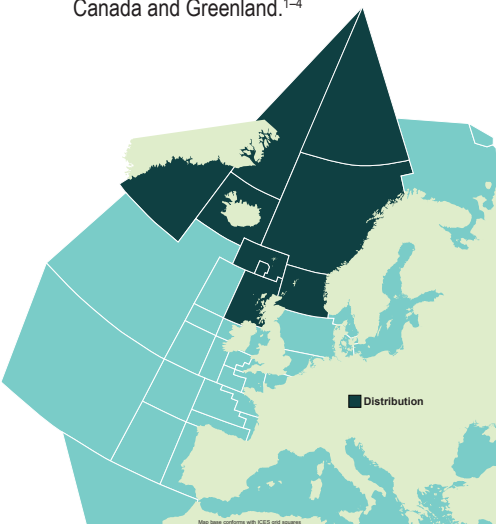
ARCTIC SKATE, Boreal Skate, Blackbelly Skate, Northern Skate, Arktischer Rochen (DEU), Raya Ártica (ESP), Raie Arctique (FRA), Arctische Rog (NLD).

IDENTIFICATION AND COLOUR

- 1 Short, solid tail.^{1,3}
 - 2 Thick body.^{1,3}
 - 3 Row of 25–32 star shaped thorns along midline from shoulder to first dorsal fin.^{1,3}
 - 4 0–2 thorns between dorsal fins.^{1,3}
- Dark grey to brown on dorsal surface with indistinct spots and blotches.^{1,3}
 - Ventral surface largely white in juveniles. Darker margins and blotches develop with age and size.^{1,3}

SIZE AND BIOLOGY

- Birth: 16–18cm.
- Mature: 80–90cm.
- Max. TL: 112cm.³
- Oviparous; size and number of eggcases varies with size of female. Little else known about the biology of this skate.¹
- Primarily feeds on small benthic fishes and invertebrates.^{1,3,5}



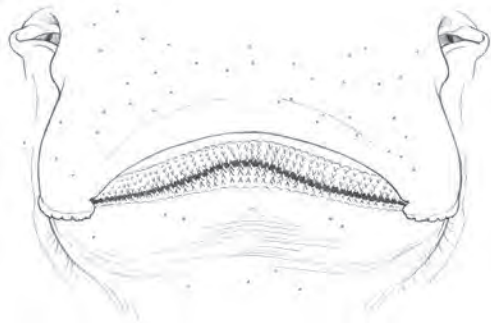
EGGCASE

- ▶ 54–77mm wide.¹
- ▶ 81–125mm long (excl. horns).¹
- ▶ Smooth in texture.¹
- ▶ Similar eggcase to the Blonde Ray *Raja brachyura*.¹



Eggcase © Ave Lynghammar

TEETH



- ▶ Narrow, pointed teeth, becoming longer, more pointed and set in parallel rows in larger individuals.¹
- ▶ Upper jaw: 35–48 rows.¹

CONSERVATION STATUS*

- ▶ IUCN Red List: Global: Least Concern (2016)
Europe: Least Concern (2015)
- ▶ Predominantly found at depths greater than the reach of most current fishing operations, but the shallower range in the northern parts of its distribution overlap with fisheries. Improved monitoring is required.^{2,4}

COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE

- ▶ Low commercial importance. Taken as bycatch in deepwater trawl and longline fisheries but generally discarded. Larger specimens may be retained and used for consumption.^{1,2,4}

MANAGEMENT*

- ▶ Subject to regulations under the CFP and prohibitions under RFMO.

REFERENCES

- 1 Ebert & Stehmann. 2013.
- 2 Kulka *et al.* 2016.
- 3 Last *et al.* 2016.
- 4 Stehmann *et al.* 2015.
- 5 González *et al.* 2006.

SIMILAR SPECIES

Starry Skate

Amblyraja radiata



Shagreen Ray

Leucoraja fullonica



Jensen's Skate *Amblyraja jenseni* (no illus.)

HABITAT

- ▶ Demersal from 250–2,500m, normally to 1,500m.^{1,2}
- ▶ Primarily found in high latitudes on continental and insular slopes.^{1,2}
- ▶ Prefers water temperatures <4°C.^{3,8}