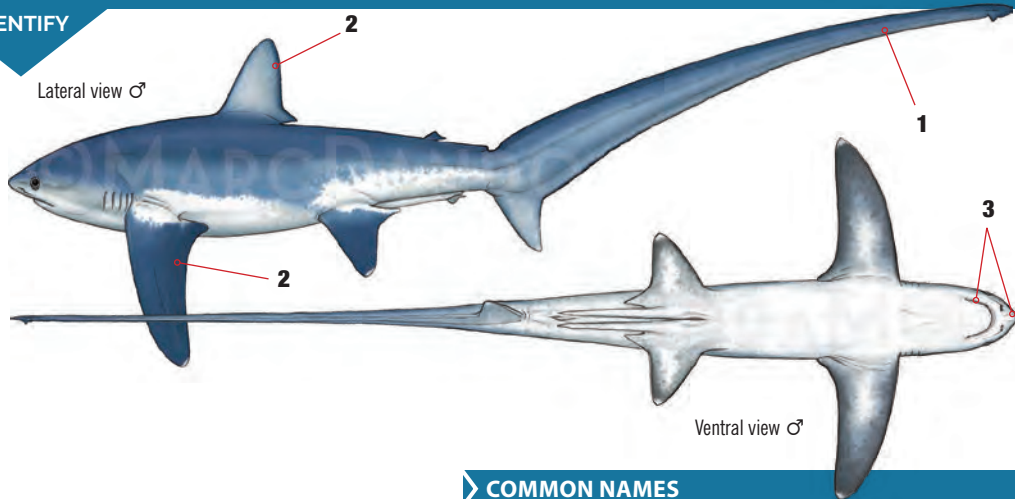




COMMON NAMES

THRESHER SHARK, Common Thresher Shark, Fox Shark, Swiveltail, Thintail Thresher, Drescherhai (DEU), Zorro (ESP), Chichi Espada (ESP), Renard (FRA), Faux (FRA), Tubarao-raposo (PRT).

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Alopias vulpinus (Bonnaterre, 1788)

DISTRIBUTION

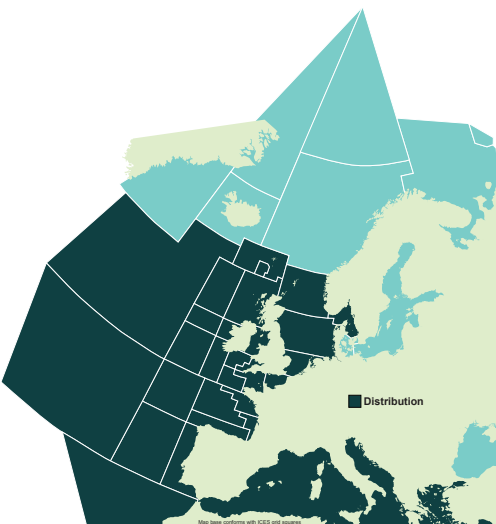
Virtually circumglobal throughout most temperate and tropical seas. Eastern Atlantic from southern Norway to South Africa, incl. the Mediterranean Sea. Western Atlantic from Canada to Argentina.^{1,2}

IDENTIFICATION AND COLOUR

- 1 Upper caudal lobe greatly elongated, as long as rest of body.^{3,4}
 - 2 Large first dorsal and pectoral fins.^{3,4}
 - 3 Pointed snout with small, arched mouth.^{3,4}
- Dorsal surface bluish grey to dark grey.^{3,4}
 - Ventral surface white, with white patches extending over pectoral and pelvic fin bases.^{3,4}
 - White dot sometimes present on the tips of pectoral fins.^{3,4}
 - Pectoral, pelvic and dorsal fins often dark grey to blackish.^{3,4}

SIZE AND BIOLOGY

- Birth: 120–150cm.
- Matures: female 260–465cm; male 260–420cm.
- Max. TL (varies regionally): 575cm, possibly to 635cm.^{3,4}
- Age at maturity est. (varies regionally): female 3–13 years; male 3–8 years. Max. age est: 38 years.^{2–4}
- Ovoviviparous, litters of 2–6 pups born in spring/summer after a nine month gestation. Embryos feed on unfertilised eggs (oophagy).⁴
- Endothermic, able to maintain body temperature above water temperature.⁵
- Uses its tail to stun and immobilise its prey.⁶
- Feeds on schooling pelagic fishes and invertebrates incl. crustaceans and cephalopods.^{3,4}



TEETH



- Small, blade-like teeth with smooth edged, slightly oblique cusp.⁴
- Upper jaw: 32–52.⁴
- Lower jaw: 25–51.⁴

SIMILAR SPECIES



Bigeye Thresher Shark *Alopias superciliosus*

HABITAT

- Near shore to offshore from surface to 650m, often along the continental shelf.^{3,4}
- Most commonly found near land in temperate waters with pups staying in inshore nurseries until close to maturity.^{3,4}
- Thought to make seasonal migrations to follow warm water.^{3,4}
- Displays vertical diel behaviour moving to shallower depths during the night.⁷

CONSERVATION STATUS*

- IUCN Red List: Global: Vulnerable (2019)
Europe: Endangered (2015)
Mediterranean: Endangered (2016)
- Slow growing with a low fecundity making it particularly vulnerable to overexploitation. A decline of 30–49% over three generations (76.5 years) has been estimated across the global population.^{2,8}

COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE

- Taken as valued bycatch in longline, driftnet and gillnet fisheries for swordfish and tuna. Juveniles may be taken by inshore gillnet and midwater trawl fisheries.^{1,2,4}
- Utilised for meat, fins and skin.^{1,2}
- Highly prized with anglers.^{1,2}

MANAGEMENT*

- Subject to prohibitions under the CFP, RFMO and FNA regulations. Additional international regulations apply.

REFERENCES

- 1 Ellis *et al.* 2015.
- 2 Rigby *et al.* 2019.
- 3 Ebert *et al.* 2013.
- 4 Ebert & Stehmann. 2013.
- 5 Weng & Block. 2004.
- 6 Aalbers *et al.* 2010.
- 7 Heard *et al.* 2018.
- 8 ICES WGEF Report. 2017.