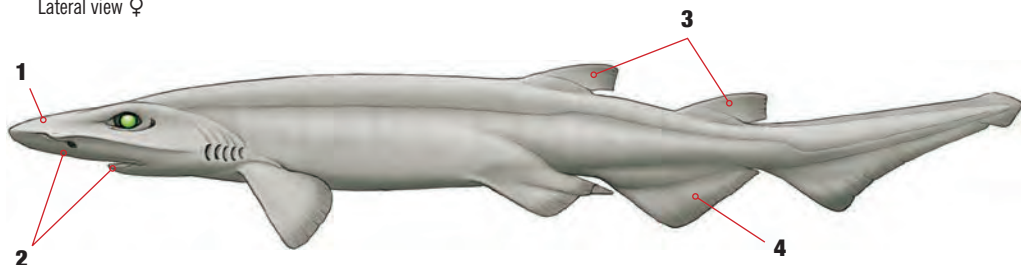


WHITE GHOST CATSHARK

Apristurus aphyodes

Lateral view ♀



SCIENTIFIC NAME

Apristurus aphyodes Nakaya & Stehmann, 1998

DISTRIBUTION

Northeast Atlantic from Iceland to the Bay of Biscay and Galicia Bank Seamount, including the Porcupine Seabight and Lousy Bank.¹⁻⁴

COMMON NAMES

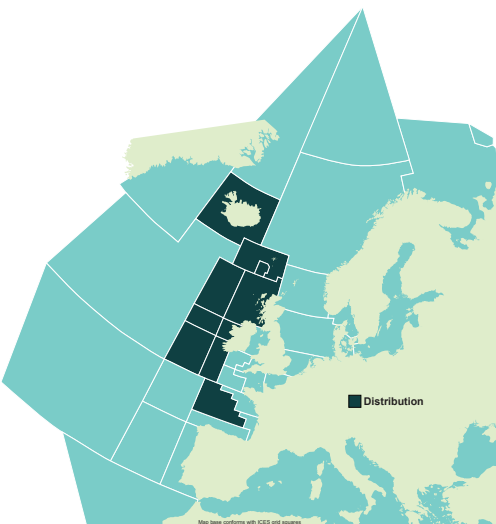
WHITE GHOST CATSHARK, Pale Catshark, Heller Tiefwasserkatzenhai (DEU), Tiburó gato fantasma (ESP), Holbiche spectre (FRA), Witte kathaai (NLD).

IDENTIFICATION AND COLOUR

- 1 Broad and flattened head with elongated snout.^{1,2}
 - 2 Large nostrils and broadly arched mouth extending in front of eyes.^{1,2}
 - 3 Both dorsal fins of similar size.^{1,2}
 - 4 Large anal fin separated from long tail fin by notch.^{1,2}
- Uniformly whitish to grey.^{1,2}
 - Fins sometimes slightly darker than body.^{1,2}

SIZE AND BIOLOGY

- Matures: female 50–56.9cm; male 47–49cm.
- Max. TL: ≥54cm.^{1,2,4-6}
- Oviparous, little else known about reproduction and biology.^{1,2}
- Feeds on crustaceans, cephalopods and small benthic fishes.^{1,2}



WHITE GHOST CATSHARK

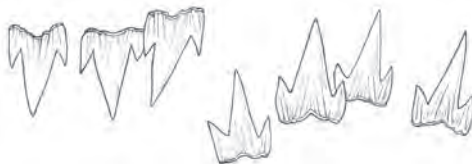
EGGCASE

- 14–17mm wide.⁷
- 43–52mm long.⁷
- Eggcase is similar in shape to other *Apristurus* species.^{1,7}
- Vase shaped, horns are short and curled.^{1,7}
- Eggcase lacks long tendrils.^{1,7}



Eggcase © Iglésias et al. 2002. Cytium, 26(1).

TEETH



- Small teeth with single high medial cusp bordered by 2–3 smaller lateral cusplets.¹
- Teeth similar in both jaws.¹
- Upper jaw: 56–68.¹
- Lower jaw: 46–64.¹

SIMILAR SPECIES



Iceland Catshark *Apristurus laurussonii*



Smalleye Catshark *Apristurus microps*



Ghost Catshark *Apristurus manis*



Mouse Catshark *Galeus murinus*

Black Roughscale Catshark *Apristurus melanoasper*
(no illus.)

HABITAT

- Found on upper to mid continental, insular and deep Atlantic slopes from 1,000–1,800m.^{1–4,8}
- Normally found over soft, sandy bottoms in temperatures 3.7–9.7°C.^{1–3}

CONSERVATION STATUS*

- IUCN Red List: Global: Least Concern (2015)
Europe: Least Concern (2015)
- A little-known catshark, within one of the most taxonomically confused genera of sharks (*Apristurus*). Much of its range lies outside the reach of deepwater fisheries affording it some protection from overexploitation.^{4,8}

COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE

- Not commercially important.⁴
- Occasionally taken in large numbers as bycatch in deepwater trawl fisheries.⁴

MANAGEMENT*

- Subject to prohibitions under the CFP and FNA regulations.

REFERENCES

- 1 Ebert & Stehmann. 2013.
- 2 Ebert et al. 2013.
- 3 Rodríguez-Cabello et al. 2014.
- 4 Walls, R. 2015.
- 5 ICES WGEF Report. 2017.
- 6 Moore et al. 2013.
- 7 Iglésias et al. 2002.
- 8 Neat et al. 2015.