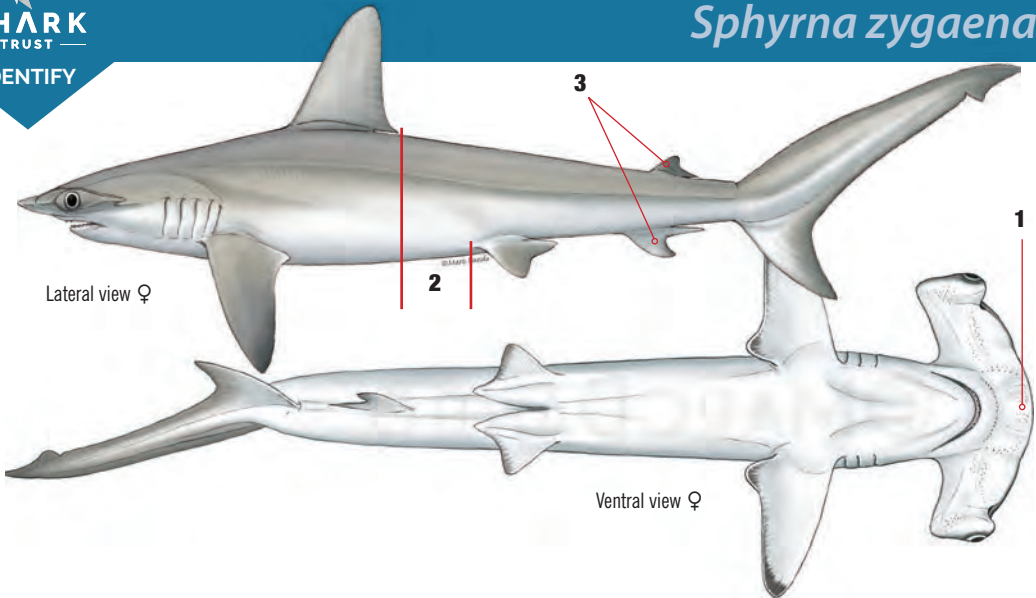


# SMOOTH HAMMERHEAD SHARK

## *Sphyrna zygaena*



### SCIENTIFIC NAME

*Sphyrna zygaena* (Linnaeus, 1758)

### DISTRIBUTION

Circumglobal in temperate and tropical waters. Eastern Atlantic from the southern British Isles to Angola, incl. the Mediterranean Sea. Northwest Atlantic from Nova Scotia, Canada to the Virgin Islands.<sup>1-4</sup>

### COMMON NAMES

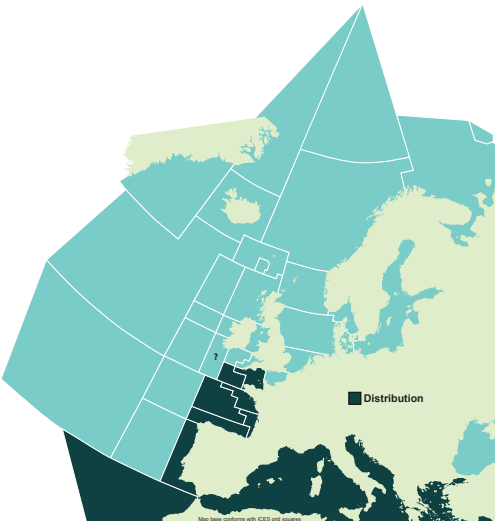
SMOOTH HAMMERHEAD SHARK, Common Hammerhead Shark, Round Headed Hammerhead Shark, Gemeiner Hammerhai (DEU), Cornuda Cruz (ESP), Requin-Marteau Commun (FRA), Capa a martiello (ITA), Peixe-canga (PRT).

### IDENTIFICATION AND COLOUR

- 1 Broad cephalofoil with no median indentation.<sup>2,3,5</sup>
  - 2 Moderately high first dorsal fin with free rear tip originating in front of pelvic fins.<sup>2,3,5</sup>
  - 3 Anal fin slightly larger than second dorsal fin.<sup>3</sup>
- Dark olive to grey brown dorsally.<sup>2,3,5</sup>
  - White ventrally.<sup>2,3,5</sup>
  - May have dusky edged pectoral fins.<sup>3,5</sup>

### SIZE AND BIOLOGY

- Birth: 50–61cm.
- Matures: female 246–265cm; male 250–260cm
- Max. TL: 370–400cm.<sup>1-3</sup>
- Max. age est.: 18 years.<sup>3</sup>
- Viviparous, litters of 20–50 pups born in spring/early summer after a 10–11 month gestation period.<sup>2,3</sup>
- Feeds on teleost fishes, other elasmobranchs, cephalopods and crustaceans.<sup>1-3</sup>



## TEETH

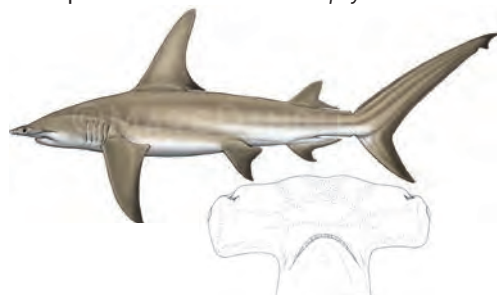


- Anterior teeth with broad, moderately long cusps and smooth or weakly serrated edges.<sup>3</sup>
- Posterior teeth mostly cusped.<sup>3</sup>
- Upper jaw: 29–32.<sup>2</sup>
- Lower jaw: 25–31.<sup>2</sup>

## SIMILAR SPECIES



Scalloped Hammerhead Shark *Sphyrna lewini*



Great Hammerhead Shark *Sphyrna mokarran*

## HABITAT

- Coastal to oceanic species that is generally pelagic; found inshore and over continental and insular shelves, with adults moving into more offshore oceanic habitats.<sup>1–4</sup>
- From surface to 200m, primarily <20m.<sup>1–5</sup>
- Capable of long trans-equatorial migrations.<sup>6</sup>
- Adults may form small groups during migrations; juveniles ≤150cm can form larger aggregations.<sup>2,3</sup>

## CONSERVATION STATUS\*

- IUCN Red List: Global: Vulnerable (2019)  
Europe: Data Deficient (2015)  
Mediterranean: Critically Endangered (2016)
- A valued bycatch caught in a variety of fishing gears. Often mistaken for the Scalloped Hammerhead in tropical waters and grouped in a single category with other hammerhead species across its range. Its life history characteristics make it vulnerable to fishing. Species-specific catch data are necessary to determine the status of this species population in the NE Atlantic.<sup>1–4</sup>

## COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE

- Taken as a valued bycatch in coastal and oceanic longline, handline, purse-seine and trawl fisheries across its range.<sup>1,3,4</sup>
- Fins, meat, liver and hides utilised for human consumption and use. Fins are highly valuable; any sharks taken as bycatch are likely to be retained.<sup>1,3,4</sup>

## MANAGEMENT\*

- Subject to FNA regulations, prohibitions under RFMOs and additional international regulations.

## REFERENCES

- 1 Rigby *et al.* 2019.
- 2 Ebert *et al.* 2013.
- 3 Ebert & Stehmann. 2013.
- 4 Ferretti *et al.* 2015.
- 5 Bester, C. n.d.
- 6 Santos & Coelho. 2018.