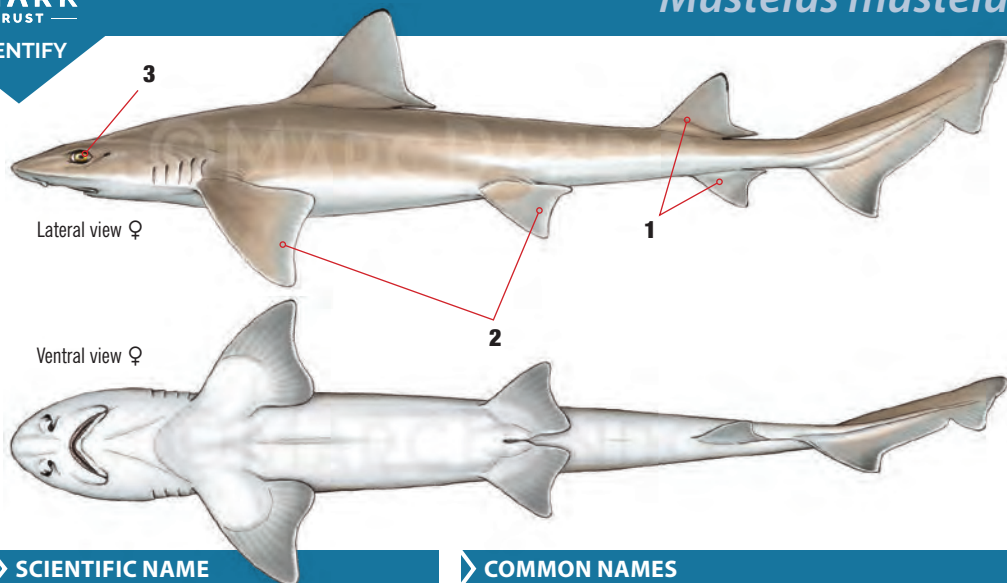


COMMON SMOOTHHOUND

Mustelus mustelus



SCIENTIFIC NAME

Mustelus mustelus (Linnaeus, 1758)

DISTRIBUTION

Widespread in the Eastern Atlantic from the Bay of Biscay to South Africa, incl. Canary Islands and Mediterranean Sea. Distribution extends into the southwest Indian Ocean. Records in the northern most parts of its range may be confused with Starry Smoothhound, *M. asterias*, and presence in waters north of the Bay of Biscay are uncertain.¹⁻⁶

COMMON NAMES

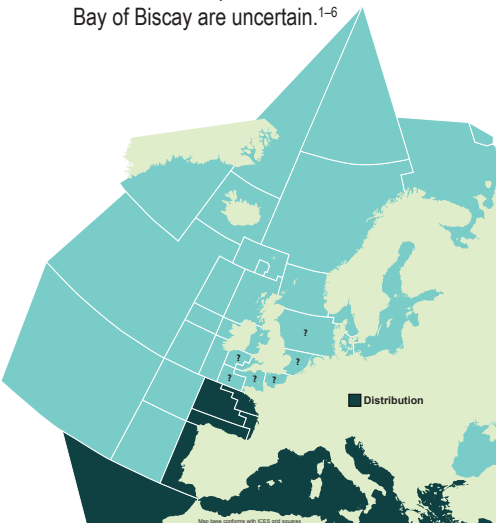
COMMON SMOOTHHOUND, Grey Mouth Dog, Common Houndshark, Smooth Dogfish, Sweet William, Glatt Hai (DEU), Musola (ESP), Emissole Lisse (FRA), Cagnoleto (ITA), Cação (PRT).

IDENTIFICATION AND COLOUR

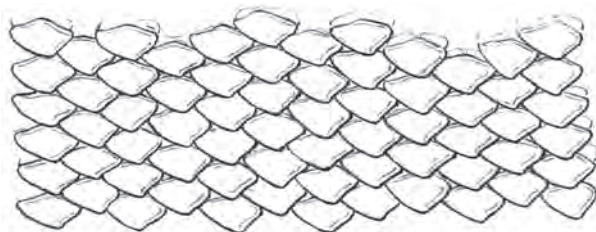
- 1 Second dorsal fin much larger than anal fin.^{1,2}
- 2 Moderately large pectoral and pelvic fins.^{1,2}
- 3 Large, close set eyes.^{1,2}
- Uniform grey to grey brown dorsally.^{1,2}
- No white spots, some specimens with dark spots.^{1,2}
- White ventrally.¹
- Often mistaken with the Starry Smoothhound *M. asterias*; genetic analysis is the most reliable method for accurate identification.^{4,7}

SIZE AND BIOLOGY

- Birth: 39cm.
- Matures: female 80cm; male 70–74cm.
- Max. TL: female 164cm; male ≥110cm.^{1,2,6}
- Age at maturity: female 12–15 years; male 6–9 years. Max. age: 24 years.^{2,4}
- Viviparous with yolk-sac placenta, litters of 4–15 pups after a 10–11 month gestation period.^{1,2}
- Primarily feeds on crustaceans; also cephalopods and teleosts.^{1,2}



TEETH



- ▶ Teeth molar-like and asymmetric, arranged in multiple rows.⁶
- ▶ Cusp reduced to a low point; cusplets absent except in very young sharks.¹
- ▶ Denticles in oral cavity confined to tongue tip and front of palate.¹

SIMILAR SPECIES



Starry Smoothhound *Mustelus asterias*



Blackspotted Smoothhound *Mustelus punctulatus*



Tope Shark *Galeorhinus galeus*



Spiny Dogfish *Squalus acanthias*

HABITAT

- ▶ Sandy and muddy substrates from shallows to at least 350m, most common <50m on continental shelves and upper slopes. Record of *M. mustelus* from 624m in Mediterranean Sea.^{1,2,8,9}
- ▶ Predominantly demersal but can be found in midwater.¹

CONSERVATION STATUS*

- ▶ IUCN Red List: Global: Vulnerable (2009)
Europe: Vulnerable (2015)
Mediterranean: Vulnerable (2016)
- ▶ Life history leaves species vulnerable to fishing pressure. Often misidentified, with little historic species-specific data available. Population declines reported in some regions.^{3,5}

COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE

- ▶ Widely caught in a variety of bottom trawl, gillnet and longline fisheries; commercially important in Mediterranean.³⁻⁵
- ▶ Sold fresh and frozen for human consumption, occasionally used for fishmeal.²
- ▶ Caught by recreational anglers.²

MANAGEMENT*

- ▶ No species-specific management in the Northeast Atlantic.
- ▶ Subject to FNA regulations.

REFERENCES

- 1 Ebert & Stehmann. 2013.
- 2 Ebert *et al.* 2013.
- 3 Farrell *et al.* 2015.
- 4 ICES WGEF Report. 2017.
- 5 Serena *et al.* 2009.
- 6 Smale & Compagno. 1997.
- 7 Farrell *et al.* 2009.
- 8 Mytilineou *et al.* 2005.
- 9 Tserpes *et al.* 2013.