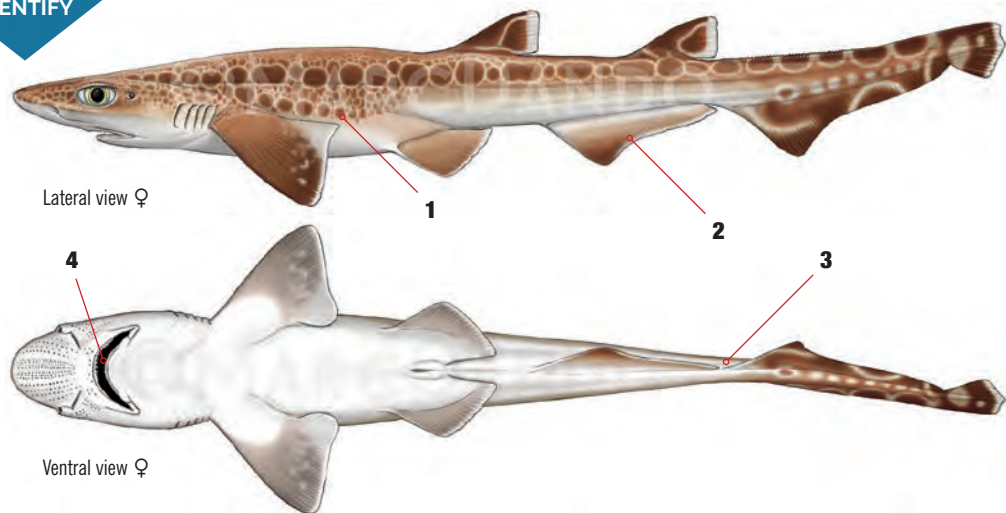


BLACKMOUTH CATSHARK

Galeus melastomus



SCIENTIFIC NAME

Galeus melastomus Rafinesque, 1810

DISTRIBUTION

Eastern Atlantic from Norway to Senegal, including the Azores. Occurs in the Mediterranean Sea.^{1,2}

COMMON NAMES

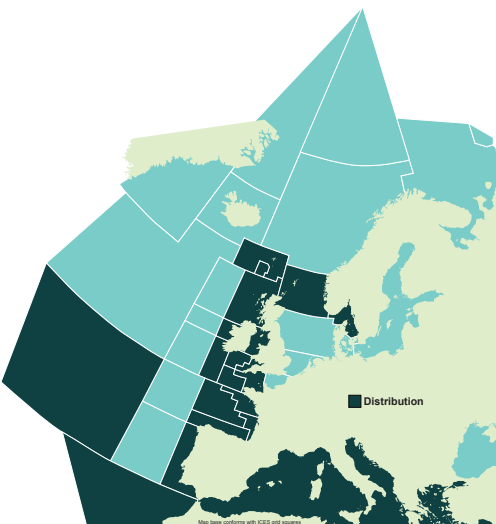
BLACKMOUTH CATSHARK, Blackmouth Dogfish, Blackmouth Angler, Mouse Catshark, Fleckhai (DEU), Pintarroja Bocanegra (ESP), Chien Espagnol (FRA), Boccanera (ITA), Spaanse Hondshaai (NLD), Leitão-boca-negra (PRT).

IDENTIFICATION AND COLOUR

- 1 Long, slender body.^{2,3}
 - 2 Long anal fin.^{2,3}
 - 3 Compressed precaudal tail.^{2,3}
 - 4 Inside of mouth black.^{2,3}
- Brown dorsally with defined pattern of 15–18 large, dark saddle blotches and numerous smaller spots.^{2,3}
 - Ventrally white.^{2,3}

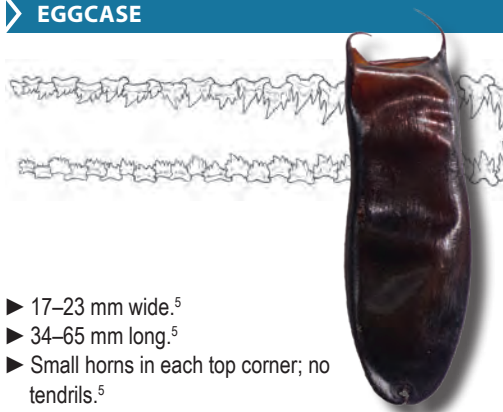
SIZE AND BIOLOGY

- Matures: female 39–45cm; male 34–42cm.
- Max. TL: female 90cm; male 61cm.²
- Oviparous, up to 13 eggcases present in female oviduct at one time.^{2,3}
- Feeds primarily on bottom invertebrates incl. shrimp and cephalopods, as well as teleosts and occasionally small elasmobranchs.^{1,4}



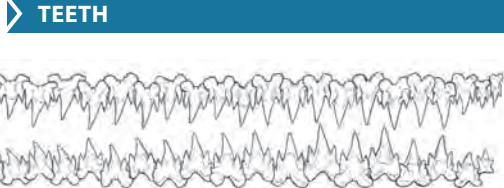
BLACKMOUTH CATSHARK

EGGCASE



- ▶ 17–23 mm wide.⁵
- ▶ 34–65 mm long.⁵
- ▶ Small horns in each top corner; no tendrils.⁵

TEETH



- ▶ Upper jaw: 42; sharp cusps with two cusplets.³
- ▶ Lower jaw: 43; similar to upper jaw but with four cusplets.³

SIMILAR SPECIES



Atlantic Sawtail Catshark *Galeus atlanticus*



Mouse Catshark *Galeus murinus*



Smallspotted Catshark *Scyliorhinus canicula*



Nursehound *Scyliorhinus stellaris*

HABITAT

- ▶ Demersal, offshore shark found mainly on outer continental shelf and upper slope but ranging from 55–2,000m, primarily 200–500m.^{2,3}
- ▶ Segregates by size; adults and juveniles found deeper than recruits.⁶

CONSERVATION STATUS*

- ▶ IUCN Red List: Global: Least Concern (2009)
Europe: Least Concern (2015)
Mediterranean: Least Concern (2016)
- ▶ Abundant species, with survey and landings data indicating stable populations. However, declines in traditional target species mean fishermen are landing greater quantities of 'unrestricted' species such as the Blackmouth Catshark.¹

COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE

- ▶ A bycatch in various fisheries along the edge of the continental shelf and upper slope. Discard levels are variable, with some European fleets discarding this species and other fleets retaining it.^{1,2,7}
- ▶ Low commercial value however meat is used for human consumption and skin used for leather.¹

MANAGEMENT*

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

REFERENCES

- 1 Abella *et al.* 2015.
- 2 Ebert & Stehmann. 2013.
- 3 Ebert *et al.* 2013.
- 4 Costa *et al.* 2005.
- 5 Gordon *et al.* 2016.
- 6 Rey *et al.* 2005.
- 7 ICES Advice. 2017.