



FIELD IDENTIFICATION GUIDE TO THE SHARKS AND RAYS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEA



FAO SPECIES IDENTIFICATION GUIDE FOR FISHERY PURPOSES

**FIELD IDENTIFICATION GUIDE TO THE SHARKS AND RAYS
OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK SEA**

by

Fabrizio Serena

Environmental Protection Agency – Tuscany Region
Livorno, Italy

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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document was prepared under the coordination of the Species Identification and Data Programme of the Marine Resources Service, Fishery Resources and Environment Division, Fisheries Department, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

At a meeting of the Sub-Committee on Marine Environment and Ecosystems of the General Fishery Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) in February 2001 in Palma de Majorca, some member countries concerned with the protection of sharks and other cartilaginous species suggested that a field guide for the identification of cartilaginous species be prepared. At its fourth session in June 2001 in Athens, the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) endorsed the suggestion and asked the COPEMED Project GCP/REM/O57/SPA to support the preparation of the field guide.

This increasing recognition of the significance of sharks and batoid fishes as ecosystem health indicators, as well as their particular importance in exploited ecosystems in the Mediterranean, have been key considerations to promote the preparation of this field guide.

Project managers: M. Lamboeuf, J. Leonart (FAO, Rome).

Scientific reviser: N. De Angelis (FAO, Rome).

Editorial assistance, page composition and indexing: M. Kautenberger-Longo (FAO, Rome).

Scientific illustrator (for material presented here for the first time): E. D'Antoni (FAO, Rome).

Cover: E. D'Antoni (FAO, Rome).

Serena, F.

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Abstract

This volume presents a fully illustrated field guide for the identification of the sharks and rays most relevant to the fisheries of the Mediterranean and Black Sea. An extensive literature review was carried out for the preparation of this document. A total of 49 sharks, 34 batoids and 1 chimaera are fully treated. The presence of 5 sharks and 2 batoids included in this field guide, need, however, to be confirmed. The guide includes sections on technical terms and measurements for sharks and batoids, and fully illustrated keys to those orders and families that occur in the region. Each species account includes: at least one annotated illustration of the species highlighting its relevant identification characters; basic information on nomenclature, synonyms and possible misidentifications; FAO common names; basic information on size, habitat and biology, distribution, importance to fisheries, and conservation and exploitation status. Colour plates for a large number of the species are included as well as two plates showing the egg cases.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT | iii |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | iv |
| INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| Physical and Chemical Characteristics of the Region | 1 |
| Geology and Physical Features | 1 |
| Oceanographic Features | 3 |
| Biodiversity and Biogeographical Characteristics of the Region. | 3 |
| The Fishery | 8 |
| Fishery Management | 10 |
| Conservation. | 10 |
| Codes for Conservation and Exploitation Status | 11 |
| CLASSIFICATION AND SYSTEMATIC ARRANGEMENT | 13 |
| SHARKS | 16 |
| Picture key of shark-like fishes | 15 |
| Technical Terms and Measurements | 16 |
| List of Orders, Families and Species Occurring in the Area | 18 |
| Guide to the Orders and Families of Sharks Occurring in the Area | 19 |
| Order HEXANCHIFORMES – Cow and frilled sharks | 18 |
| HEXANCHIDAE | 18 |
| Order SQUALIFORMES – Dogfish sharks | 18 |
| ECHINORHINIDAE | 18 |
| SQUALIDAE | 18 |
| CENTROPHORIDAE. | 19 |
| ETMOPTERIDAE | 19 |
| SOMNIOSIDAE | 19 |
| OXYNOTIDAE | 19 |
| DALATIIDAE | 21 |
| Order SQUATINIFORMES – Angel sharks. | 21 |
| SQUATINIDAE. | 21 |
| Order LAMNIFORMES – Mackerel sharks | 21 |
| ODONTASPIDIDAE | 21 |
| ALOPIIDAE. | 22 |
| CETORHINIDAE | 22 |
| LAMNIDAE | 22 |

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Order CARCHARHINIFORMES – Ground sharks | 22 |
| SCYLORHINIDAE | 23 |
| TRIAKIDAE | 23 |
| CARCHARHINIDAE | 23 |
| SPHYRNIDAE | 23 |
| Guide to Families and Species | |
| HEXANCHIDAE | 24 |
| <i>Heptranchias perlo</i> (Bonnaterre, 1788) | 24 |
| <i>Hexanchus griseus</i> (Bonnaterre, 1788) | 24 |
| <i>Hexanchus nakamurai</i> Teng, 1962. | 25 |
| ECHINORHINIDAE | 25 |
| <i>Echinorhinus brucus</i> (Bonnaterre, 1788) | 25 |
| SQUALIDAE | 26 |
| <i>Squalus acanthias</i> Linnaeus, 1758 | 26 |
| <i>Squalus blainvillei</i> (Risso, 1826). | 26 |
| <i>Squalus cf. megalops</i> (Macleay, 1881) | 27 |
| CENTROPHORIDAE | 27 |
| <i>Centrophorus granulosus</i> (Bloch and Schneider, 1801) | 27 |
| <i>Centrophorus uyato</i> (Rafinesque, 1810) | 28 |
| ETMOPTERIDAE | 28 |
| <i>Etmopterus spinax</i> (Linnaeus, 1758). | 28 |
| SOMNIOSIDAE | 29 |
| <i>Centroscymnus coelolepis</i> Bocage and Capello, 1864 | 29 |
| <i>Somniosus (Rhinoscymnus) rostratus</i> (Risso, 1810) | 29 |
| OXYNOTIDAE | 30 |
| <i>Oxynotus centrina</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 30 |
| DALATIIDAE | 30 |
| <i>Dalatias licha</i> (Bonnaterre, 1788) | 30 |
| SQUATINIDAE | 31 |
| <i>Squatina aculeata</i> Dumeril, in Cuvier, 1817. | 31 |
| <i>Squatina oculata</i> Bonaparte, 1840 | 31 |
| <i>Squatina squatina</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 32 |
| ODONTASPIDIDAE | 32 |
| <i>Carcharias taurus</i> Rafinesque, 1810 | 32 |
| <i>Odontaspis ferox</i> (Risso, 1810) | 33 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| ALOPIIDAE | 33 |
| <i>Alopias superciliosus</i> (Lowe, 1839) | 33 |
| <i>Alopias vulpinus</i> (Bonnaterre, 1788). | 34 |
| CETORHINIDAE | 34 |
| <i>Cetorhinus maximus</i> (Gunnerus, 1765) | 34 |
| LAMNIDAE | 35 |
| <i>Carcharodon carcharias</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 35 |
| <i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i> Rafinesque, 1810 | 35 |
| <i>Isurus paucus</i> Guitart Manday, 1966 | 36 |
| <i>Lamna nasus</i> (Bonnaterre, 1788) | 36 |
| SCYLIORHINIDAE | 37 |
| <i>Galeus atlanticus</i> (Vaillant, 1888) | 37 |
| <i>Galeus melastomus</i> Rafinesque, 1810 | 37 |
| <i>Scyliorhinus canicula</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 38 |
| <i>Scyliorhinus stellaris</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 38 |
| TRIAKIDAE | 39 |
| <i>Galeorhinus galeus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 39 |
| <i>Mustelus asterias</i> Cloquet, 1821 | 39 |
| <i>Mustelus mustelus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 40 |
| <i>Mustelus punctulatus</i> Risso, 1826 | 40 |
| CARCHARHINIDAE | 41 |
| <i>Carcharhinus altimus</i> (Springer, 1950) | 41 |
| <i>Carcharhinus brachyurus</i> (Günther, 1870) | 41 |
| <i>Carcharhinus brevipinna</i> (Müller and Henle, 1839) | 42 |
| <i>Carcharhinus falciformis</i> (Bibron, in Müller and Henle, 1839) | 42 |
| <i>Carcharhinus limbatus</i> (Valenciennes, in Müller and Henle, 1839). | 43 |
| <i>Carcharhinus melanopterus</i> (Quoy and Gaimard, 1824) | 43 |
| <i>Carcharhinus obscurus</i> (Lesueur, 1818). | 44 |
| <i>Carcharhinus plumbeus</i> (Nardo, 1827) | 44 |
| <i>Galeocerdo cuvier</i> (Péron and Lesueur, in Lesueur, 1822) | 45 |
| <i>Prionace glauca</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 45 |
| <i>Rhizoprionodon acutus</i> (Rüppell, 1837) | 46 |
| SPHYRNIDAE | 46 |
| <i>Sphyrna (Mesozygaena) tudes</i> (Valenciennes, 1822). | 46 |
| <i>Sphyrna (Sphyrna) lewini</i> (Griffith and Smith, in Cuvier, Griffith and Smith, 1834) | 47 |
| <i>Sphyrna (Sphyrna) mokarran</i> (Rüppell, 1837) | 47 |
| <i>Sphyrna (Sphyrna) zygaena</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 48 |

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| BATOID FISHES | 49 |
| Picture key of skates, rays and guitarfishes | 49 |
| Technical Terms and Measurements | 50 |
| List of Families and Species Occurring in the Area | 51 |
| Guide to the Order and Families of Batoid Fishes Occurring in the Area | 52 |
| Order RAJIFORMES - Batoids. | 52 |
| Suborder PRISTOIDEI | 52 |
| PRISTIDAE | 52 |
| Suborder RHINOBATOIDEI | 52 |
| RHINOBATIDAE | 52 |
| Suborder TORPEDINOIDEI | 53 |
| TORPEDINIDAE | 53 |
| Suborder RAJOIDEI | 53 |
| RAJIDAE | 53 |
| Suborder MYLIOBATOIDEI | 54 |
| DASYATIDAE | 54 |
| GYMNURIDAE | 54 |
| MYLIOBATIDAE | 55 |
| RHINOPTERIDAE | 55 |
| MOBULIDAE | 55 |
| Guide to Families and Species | |
| PRISTIDAE | 56 |
| <i>Pristis pectinata</i> Latham, 1794 | 56 |
| <i>Pristis pristis</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 56 |
| RHINOBATIDAE | 57 |
| <i>Rhinobatos (Glaucostegus) cemiculus</i> Geoffroy St-Hilaire, 1817 | 57 |
| <i>Rhinobatos (Rhinobatos) rhinobatos</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 57 |
| TORPEDINIDAE | 58 |
| <i>Torpedo (Tetronarce) nobiliana</i> Bonaparte, 1835 | 58 |
| <i>Torpedo (Torpedo) marmorata</i> Risso, 1810 | 58 |
| <i>Torpedo (Torpedo) sinuspersici</i> Olfers, 1831 | 59 |
| <i>Torpedo (Torpedo) torpedo</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 59 |
| RAJIDAE | 60 |
| <i>Dipturus batis</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 60 |
| <i>Dipturus oxyrinchus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 60 |
| <i>Leucoraja circularis</i> (Couch, 1838) | 61 |
| <i>Leucoraja fullonica</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 61 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| <i>Leucoraja melitensis</i> (Clark, 1926) | 62 |
| <i>Leucoraja naevus</i> (Müller and Henle, 1841). | 62 |
| <i>Raja asterias</i> Delaroche, 1809 | 63 |
| <i>Raja brachyura</i> Lafont, 1873 | 63 |
| <i>Raja clavata</i> Linnaeus, 1758 | 64 |
| <i>Raja miraletus</i> Linnaeus, 1758 | 64 |
| <i>Raja montagui</i> Fowler, 1910 | 65 |
| <i>Raja polystigma</i> Regan, 1923 | 65 |
| <i>Raja radula</i> Delaroche, 1809. | 66 |
| <i>Raja undulata</i> Lacépède, 1802. | 66 |
| <i>Rostroraja alba</i> (Lacépède, 1803) | 67 |
| DASYATIDAE | 67 |
| <i>Dasyatis centroura</i> (Mitchill, 1815) | 67 |
| <i>Dasyatis marmorata</i> Steindachner, 1892 | 68 |
| <i>Dasyatis pastinaca</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 68 |
| <i>Himantura uarnak</i> (Forsskål, 1775) | 69 |
| <i>Pteroplatytrygon violacea</i> (Bonaparte, 1832) | 69 |
| <i>Taeniura grabata</i> (Geoffroy St-Hilaire, 1817) | 70 |
| GYMNURIDAE | 70 |
| <i>Gymnura altavela</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 70 |
| MYLIOBATIDAE | 71 |
| <i>Myliobatis aquila</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) | 71 |
| <i>Pteromylaeus bovinus</i> (Geoffroy St-Hilaire, 1817) | 71 |
| RHINOPTERIDAE | 72 |
| <i>Rhinoptera marginata</i> (Geoffroy St-Hilaire, 1817) | 72 |
| MOBULIDAE | 72 |
| <i>Mobula mobular</i> (Bonnaterre, 1788) | 72 |
| CHIMAERAS | 73 |
| Technical Terms and Measurements | 73 |
| Order, Family and Species of Chimaera Occurring in the Area | 73 |
| Order CHIMAERIFORMES | 73 |
| CHIMAERIDAE | 73-74 |
| <i>Chimaera monstrosa</i> Linnaeus, 1758 | 74 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 75 |
| INDEX TO SCIENTIFIC AND VERNACULAR NAMES | 85 |
| LIST OF COLOUR PLATES | 94 |