

Saving Our Uniquely Australian Sharks and Rays

Information Kit

Businesses



Whitefin swellshark (*Cephaloscyllium albiginnum*).
Image: MarineThemes.

WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

Australia is a global shark and ray “hotspot” with around one-quarter of the world’s shark and ray species calling our waters home. A total of 322 species are found in Australian waters, half of which are endemic – that is, they’re found nowhere else in the world¹.

Sharks tend to get the most attention but did you know that most of our ‘true-blue’ endemic Aussies are actually rays? Nearly three quarters (69%) of rays are unique to Australian waters compared to less than half (39%) of shark species¹. Endemic species like the southern fiddler ray and the Australian blacktip shark can be found in coastal shallows where we dive and snorkel, but the majority of our endemic species are found in the deep, dark waters ranging from 100 meters to over a kilometre below the waves!

Australia is recognised as global hotspot of extinction risk for some of the world’s most unique, and threatened sharks and rays². The biggest threat to our endemic Aussie sharks and rays is trawling on or near the sea floor, causing them to be swept up in giant scoop nets. Another big threat are longlines that have hundreds or thousands of baited hooks stretching out for more than a kilometre on or near the seafloor. Those killed, including the critically endangered whitefin swellshark, can end up on our plates as the humble piece of flake from the local fish and chip shop.

Fortunately, Australia is also recognised as one of the few countries in the world best equipped to protect and save many of our threatened endemic species – but only if we act now. So how can we save our true-blue Aussie sharks and rays?

WHAT ARE OUR GOALS?

- Encouraging and assisting retailers in sourcing and promoting sustainable alternatives to shark meat by joining the GoodFish program.
- Empower individuals to make informed and sustainable choices when consuming seafood using the GoodFish Sustainable Seafood Guide.
- Build a community of Shark Champions, to speak for those that can’t.
- Introduce Australian community to our unique, weird and wonderful sharks and rays – an opportunity to discover and explore the wonders living beneath the waves at unfathomable depths.
- Using people power to drive protection of these species that will improve the sustainability of Australia’s fisheries, and our ocean’s health. This can include protecting critical habitats from exploitation and listing species for protection under national environmental law.

1. Last PR, Stevens JD (2009) ‘Sharks and Rays of Australia.’ CSIRO Publishing: Australia.
2. Stein RW et al. (2018) ‘Global priorities for conserving the evolutionary history of sharks, rays and chimaeras’ *Nature Ecology & Evolution* 2, 288–298. doi:10.1038/s41559-017-0448-4



WHAT CAN BUSINESSES DO?

#GiveFlakeABreak and support other local businesses (i.e. fishers, retailers & restaurants) and the environment by choosing truly sustainable seafood using the GoodFish: Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide.

If you're a seafood provider or retailer, contact GoodFish to learn more how you can become part GoodFish program and enjoy the wide-ranging benefits of sourcing truly sustainable and affordable seafood options. Even if you're just curious about sustainable seafood, GoodFish can provide you with detailed information to help you make the best choice for you.

Sign the **petition** and ask the Australian Government to better protect our endemic sharks and rays in Australia's largest fishery

Spread the shark love, and encourage others to **#GiveFlakeABreak** so that we can give our Aussie sharks and rays the help they desperately need.

TO FIND OUT MORE

sharkchampions.org.au

GoodFish.org.au

amcs.org.au

Awesome! I pledge to #GiveFlakeABreak

If you'd like to learn more about sharks and how to help save our endangered species, join over 50,000 supporters and take part in a range of actions at SharkChampions.org.au

Whether you're a consumer or retailer and you'd like to learn about Australia's sustainable fisheries, seafood alternatives, or how to be a part of the GoodFish program, get in contact with us at GoodFish.org.au

