

Nomads of the Gulf, Guardians of the Sea, Friends of the Fishermen

The technical term for a shark is "ELAS-MO-BRANK".

Did you know that in the UAE alone there are 30 different species of ELAS-MO-BRANK? Over are on the verge of extinction. That's quite a scary thought. If you have been to the Dubai Mall or The Lost Chambers at Atlantis, you will have seen a number of ELAS-MO-BRA NK species, including rays and sawfish. Sharks are a very important part of the ocean's ecosystem.

Why are they important?

By eating smaller fish, molluscs and clams, they help to keep the numbers of other species in our seas in balance. They also help to drive schools of fish closer to the shore making it easier for fishermen to catch them.

Sharks have amazing natural gadgets like night vision and vibration sensors and an amazing sense of smell. What's more, they've been on this planet for over 400 million years – us humans have only been around for 250,000 years!

Between 90 and 99% of some shark populations have already been wiped out and humans are responsible for killing around 73 MILLION sharks every year – that's 3 sharks every second! At this rate, we could see a mass extinction within our lifetime. That means that, unless we do something now, whole shark species could cease to exist altogether.

Sharks are caught for their fins, which are highly prized, especially in China where they are made into an expensive delicacy called shark fin soup. 80% of the sharks killed end up in soup.

The UAE is the 5th largest exporter of shark fins in the world, despite shark fins having no place in their local culture. In 2008, the UAE tried to prevent cruelty and waste by putting a ban on shark finning. Now, fishermen are allowed to sell the fins as long as they also bring in the bodies. Perhaps people don't realise how much damage they are doing to our shark populations and to our oceans. No sharks means an unhealthy ocean, which means less oxygen for us to breathe. It also affects fish populations, which affects the whole food chain system – including the food on our plates!

We can all help to protect and save the UAE's sharks by spreading the word. Talk to your friends and family about how important sharks are. If you ask everyone you know to avoid products containing shark, then there won't be as high a demand for them and fewer sharks will be fished out of our seas. The more care and concern we show, the more we can do to help them!



Shark Art Corner

Create a picture of your favourite shark, ray or sawfish and send them in to our online gallery for a chance to star as our picture of the week!

Check out your pictures on www.globalocean.org.uk.
Send all entries to info@globalocean.org.uk

KEY FACTS

- 1 Sharks have been around for about 400 million years and have been safeguarding the oceans before dinosaurs roamed the earth!
- 2 The United Arab Emirates has 30 species of sharks, 16 of which are endangered – which means they might become extinct like the dinosaurs soon
- 3 Sharks have rows of backup teeth, to make sure they never run out. The size and shape of the tooth can tell you what sort of food the shark eats, and the shak can use up to 20,000 teeth within its lifetime.
- 4 Although many sharks are carnivores some eat plankton instead, just like whales! These harmless sharks are protected all over the world, and you can find one species, the Whaleshark in the Arabian Gulf! Strangely, these undisruptive sharks can be the largest!
- 5 Sharks do not have a single bone in their bodies – instead, their skeleton is made up of cartilage (like the tip of your ear) to allow them to move faster and freely.
- 6 Sharks have eyes similar to a cat to let them see better in the water. They can also feel vibrations in the water which is a unusual! The shark also has a super sense of smell.
- 7 Last year, only 12 people died because of shark attacks. However, roughly 100 million sharks were killed by humans. Is that fair?

WORDSEARCH

What strange things have been found inside sharks? What can you find?

R	S	T	R	A	V	B	S	L	L	T	U	I
L	F	Y	U	X	A	F	T	I	H	Z	F	G
K	I	C	O	C	B	O	T	T	L	E	S	H
T	P	H	M	E	D	I	E	P	A	K	N	K
H	T	O	R	P	E	D	O	G	R	C	A	E
T	R	E	A	S	U	R	E	C	H	E	S	T
B	O	L	F	E	N	S	R	O	G	R	I	H
N	I	K	O	V	N	E	U	R	D	R	U	M
Q	A	O	T	I	A	M	G	T	H	P	B	S
A	G	E	I	S	I	V	C	O	A	T	G	T
L	N	B	U	E	L	K	E	F	R	X	T	B
P	A	T	S	R	S	I	B	G	A	N	Q	R

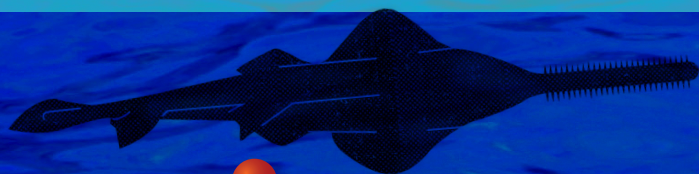
- NAILS
- BOTTLES
- TREASURE CHEST
- COAT
- SUIT OF ARMOUR
- DRUM
- TORPEDO

Yes really!
And that all got there
because of us human beings.

Key Elasmobranch Species

in the United Arab Emirates

● = Critically Endangered ● = Endangered ● = Vulnerable ● = Near Threatened



Green Sawfish
(Grows up to 5m in length)



Scalloped Hammerhead
(Grows up to 4.3m)



Mottled Eagle Ray
(Grows up to 2.5m)



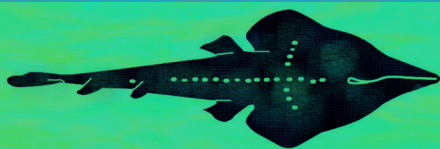
Great Hammerhead
(Grows up to 6m in length)



Banded Eagle Ray
(Length 1m, width 64cm)



Whaleshark
(Average Adult 9.7m)



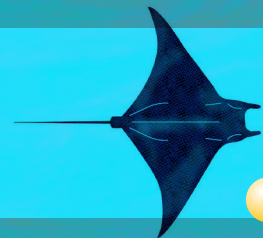
Sharpnose Guitarfish
(Up to 2.15m)



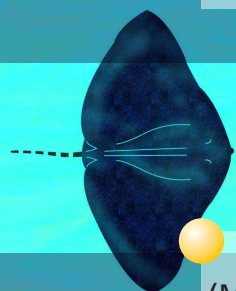
Silvertip Shark
(Grows up to 3m)



Black Tip Reef Shark
(Average 1.6m long)



Pygmy Devilray
(Maximum Disk Width 1m)



Longtail Butterfly Ray
(Maximum Disc Width 2.5m)



Winghead Shark
(Up to 1.86m long)

Plastic Debris Facts

Every year some 45,000 tons of plastic waste are dumped into the world's oceans. The amount of plastic waste has been increasing about 10% each year for the past 20 years. The problems plastics pose in the marine environment have poorly understood consequences.

1. Two hundred and sixty seven species around the world are harmed by plastic. Forty four percent of seabird, forty three percent of ocean mammals, and eighty six percent of sea turtles ingest or become tangled in plastic.
2. Plastics **do not biodegrade**, they photo degrade – breaking down under the exposure of the sun's ultraviolet rays into smaller and smaller pieces. This means virtually every piece of plastic ever made still exists in some shape or form.
3. Plastic debris in the marine environment fragments into smaller pieces resulting in ingestion by smaller marine organisms. Small plastic pieces mix with natural food sources, and the inability of these ingested pieces to pass through the digestive tract leads to accumulation of non-nutritive elements in the body of marine organisms. This can result in **malnutrition and eventual starvation** (causing significant reductions in world fish populations).
4. Ingestion of plastic by fish also results in small **plastic pieces entering the food chain**, which could result in consumption by humans.
5. Mounting evidence points to **high levels of oestrogenic compounds** leaching from plastic into water, which in humans, can lead to increased body fat, depression and headaches, increase risk of breast cancer and increased blood clotting amongst others.
6. Plastics floating at sea may **encourage invasive species** by providing a surface for them to be carried upon. This can have huge negative impacts on local species populations as competition for food and shelter increases.
7. Each high quality reusable bag you use has the potential to **eliminate an average of 1,000 plastic bags** over its lifetime.

GLOBAL OCEAN is a small marine conservation foundation that aims to integrate the public stewardship with the marine world and generate a community with the inspiration to contribute to marine conservation.

GLOBAL OCEAN develops key campaigns around current marine issues. By raising awareness and providing simple yet effective steps such as events and online petitions, the general public can contribute and make a real difference to marine protection.

TRUE or FALSE?

1. Sharks have been around since before dinosaurs. true ☐ false ☐
2. Sharks only eat other fish. true ☐ false ☐
3. All sharks will attack humans on sight. true ☐ false ☐
4. Sometimes, sharks get confused and accidentally cause us death or injury. However, this is nothing like the death or injury human beings inflict on them. true ☐ false ☐
5. Sharks don't have bones. true ☐ false ☐

Answers:
1: True. Sharks have been around for about 400 million years and have been safeguarding the oceans before dinosaurs roamed the earth!
2: False. Although many sharks are carnivores, some eat plankton instead, just like baleen whales! The largest shark feeds on tiny plankton and can be seen in the Gulf: the nomadic and charismatic gentle giant - the whale shark.
3: False. Sharks and rays are usually very wary of people and most sharks will swim away long before you see them. Scientists agree that attacks are usually the result of mistaken identity or the sharks feeling threatened because they are cornered.
4: False. Last year, only 12 people died because of shark incidents in comparison to about 100,000,000 sharks were willfully killed.
5: True. Sharks do not have a single bone in their bodies – instead, their skeleton is made up of cartilage (like the tip of your ear) to allow them to move faster and freely through the water.

To help generate public support for marine conservation, GLOBAL OCEAN also works with the arts, providing a platform to relay our messages. Our work includes educational outreach workshops located in the classroom as well as in museums, galleries and at festivals.

