

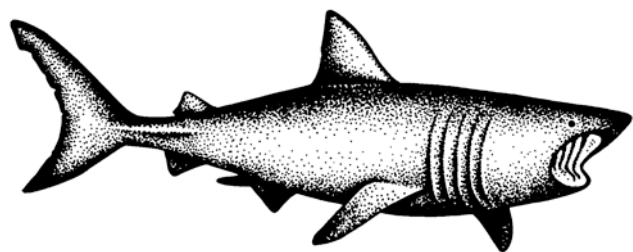
Bat ray

Bat ray

Myliobatis californica [size: to 6 ft. wide (1.8 m)]

Bat rays prey on clams, shrimp, worms and other invertebrates that live in the mud. Flapping their wings to clear away mud, rays suck up their prey, crushing the shells with their strong jaws and hard, flat teeth.

In summer, bat rays enter sloughs and bays where they give birth to live young. It's a trait they share with several other members of the shark family.



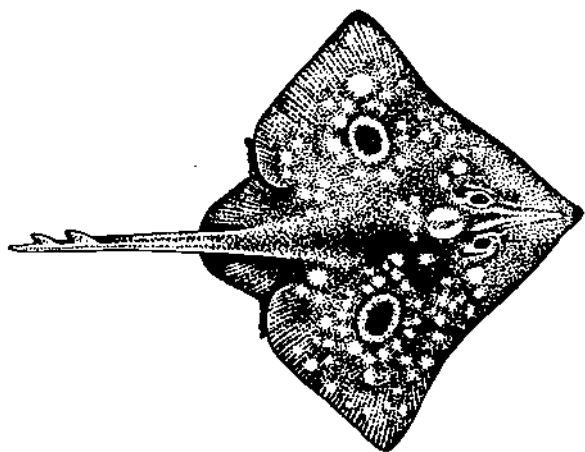
Basking shark

Basking shark

Cetorhinus maximus [size: to 45 ft. (13.7 m)]

These large sharks live both offshore and near the coast and are often seen near the surface.

Basking sharks eat zooplankton (small, drifting animals like copepods and krill). To gather and strain their food, basking sharks have large mouths and long, stiff, hair-like projections called gill rakers lining their gills. Their numerous teeth are tiny.



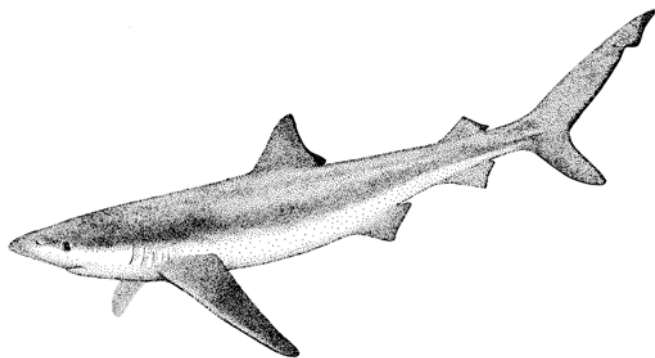
Big skate

Big skate

Raja binocularata [size: to 8 ft. (2.4 m) wide]

The largest skate in the area, big skates live on the bottom in shallow water, to 360 ft (110 m). Instead of giving birth to live young, they lay egg cases called "mermaid's purses."

Big skates eat fishes, crabs and shrimp. Their predators include sevengill sharks. Fishers also catch skates. The "wings" of the skate are the part that people like to eat most.



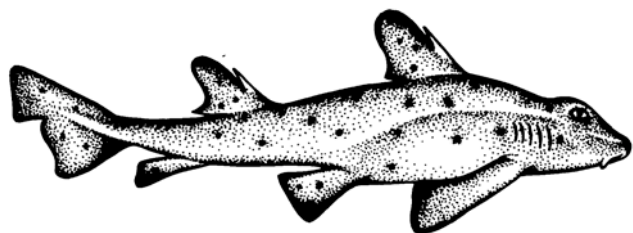
Blue shark

Blue shark

Prionace glauca [Size: to 13.5 ft. (4 m)]

Blue sharks usually live offshore but visit the nearshore waters of Monterey Bay in late summer and fall. They make seasonal migrations of thousands of miles. Sleek and graceful, they use their front fins for gliding, a swimming method that is especially efficient at low speeds.

Blue sharks feed mostly on fishes and squid.



Horn shark

Horn shark

Heterodontus francisci [size: to 4 ft. (1.2 m)]

Horn sharks live on the bottom nearshore, in rocky or sandy areas or in kelp forests. Their spots serve as camouflage, while flexible lower fins help them move easily over the seafloor.

Horn sharks eat small fishes and invertebrates such as shrimp and clams. Their low, flat back teeth help crush the shells of their prey.

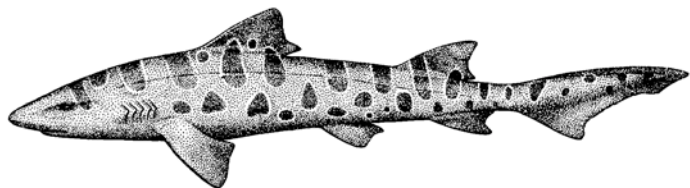


Filetail catshark

Filetail catshark

Parmaturus xaniurus [Size: to 22 in. (56 cm)]

A filetail catshark swims gracefully along the muddy seafloor. Gray-brown above and pale below, this fish blends in with its benthic habitat. Its large green eyes look upward, unlike those of shallow-water sharks. Catsharks lay eggs with curly corners. The curls catch on edges of rocks and sponges to anchor the egg case near the deep seafloor. Here it'll stay for two years while a tiny catshark grows inside.



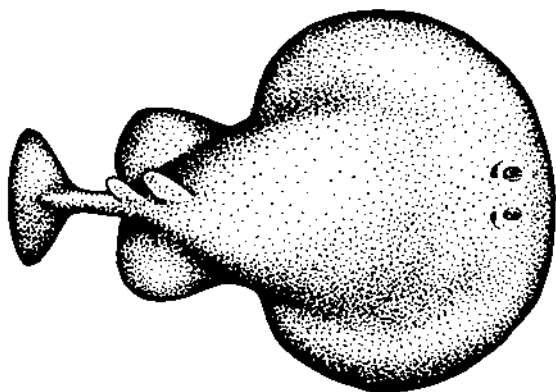
Leopard shark

Leopard shark

Triakis semifasciata [size: to 7 ft. (2.1 m)]

Leopard sharks live on sandy or rocky bottoms of bays or other inshore areas. Their spotted and barred coloring camouflages them against the seafloor. Leopard sharks bear live young.

Leopard sharks eat fishes, fish eggs and invertebrates like crabs, worms and shrimps. Sevengills and other large sharks prey on leopard sharks.



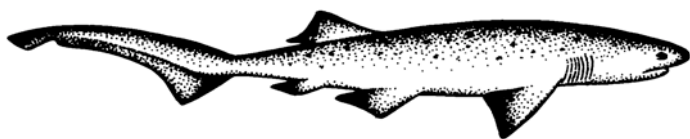
Pacific electric ray

Pacific electric ray

Torpedo californica [size: to 5 ft. (1.5 m)]

Electric rays live on fine sandy bottoms, often in kelp forests or near rocky reefs. They prefer shallow to moderately deep water, to 640 ft. (195 m).

Electric rays eat mostly fishes. Though they're soft-bodied and slow-moving, these rays can stun prey and fend off enemies with electric shocks of up to 200 volts



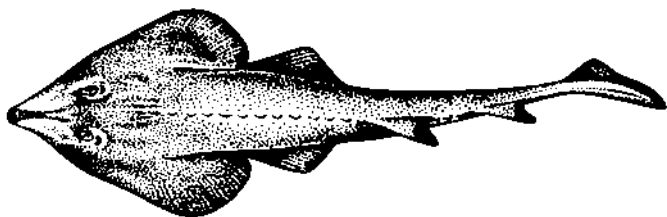
Sevengill shark

Sevengill shark

Notorynchus maculatus [size: to 9 ft. (2.7 m)]

Sevengill sharks often live in shallow bays. They have seven gills on each side of the body, unlike most sharks, which have five. Because of their bulky bodies, sevengills and their relatives are called "cow sharks."

Sevengills eat crabs and fishes (including small sharks, skates and rays) as well as dead animals.



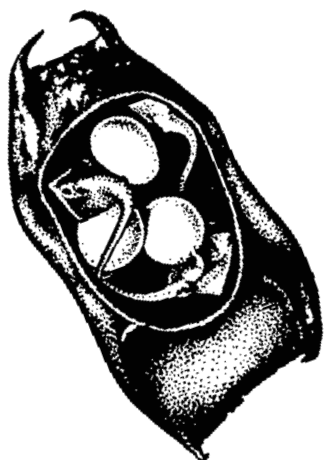
Shovelnose guitarfish

Shovelnose guitarfish

Rhinobatos productus [size: to 6 ft. (1.8 m)]

Shovelnose guitarfish live on muddy or sandy bottoms inshore and in bays, burrowing in the sand when they're resting. They prefer shallow water, to 50 ft. (15 m).

Guitarfish eat small fishes and invertebrates like crabs, worms and shrimp. Their teeth are small and blunt for crushing their prey.



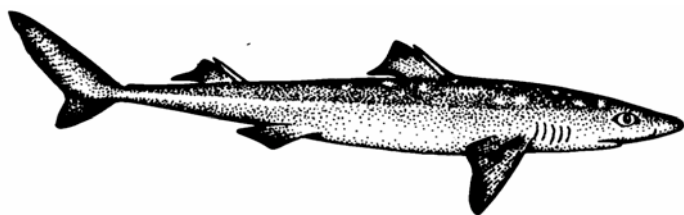
Skate egg case

Skate egg case

Raja binoculata [size: to 12 in. (30 cm)]

Instead of giving birth to live young, skates lay a tough egg case containing one to seven skate embryos. The egg case, called a "mermaid's purse," has hooked corners that may help it catch in seaweed on the sand. The young skates grow and develop for many months, each nourished by a yolk.

(The picture gives you a cutaway view of the case.)



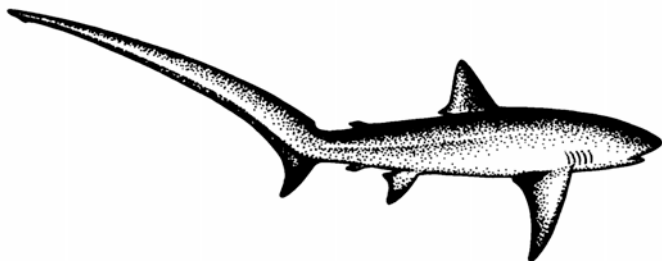
Spiny dogfish

Spiny dogfish

Squalus acanthias [size: to 5 ft. (1.5 m)]

Spiny dogfish live in schools, both near the coast (often in bays) and offshore as deep as 2,400 ft. (732 m). They've been known to live 80 years or more. A spiny dogfish has one poisonous spine in front of each dorsal fin.

They eat small fishes and invertebrates like crabs and shrimps; they're also caught by fishers for food.



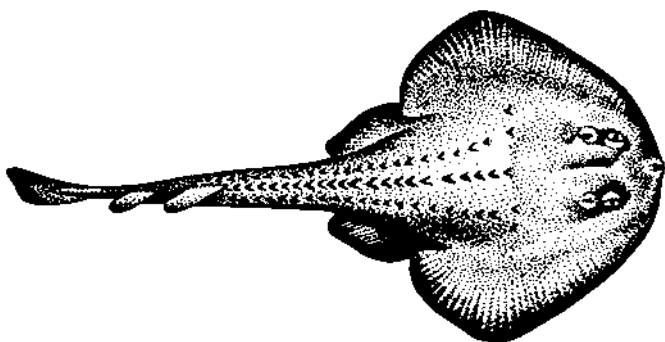
Thresher shark

Thresher shark

Alopias vulpinus [size: to 20 ft. (6 m)]

Thresher sharks live in the open sea, sometimes coming closer to shore as they hunt. Their young are often found inshore off beaches and in bays.

They eat fishes, squid and other animals of the open sea. Biologists think thresher sharks use the long upper part of the tail to round up and stun prey. These sharks are caught by commercial fishers for food.



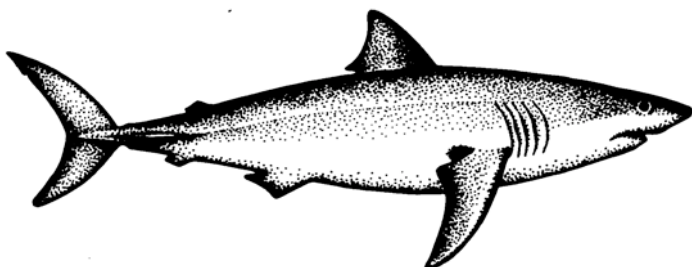
Thornback ray

Thornback ray

Platyrhinoidis triseriata [size: to 3 ft. (91 cm)]

Thornback rays live on mud or sandy bottoms in shallow, nearshore areas to 150 ft. (46 m). They are often found off beaches or in bays, where they bury themselves in the sediment.

These rays eat sand-dwelling invertebrates like shrimps, clams and worms. The rows of hooked spines on their backs are probably for defense.



White shark

White shark

Carchardodon carcharias [size: to 30 ft. (9.1 m)]

White sharks live both offshore and near the coast. Their torpedo-shaped bodies and symmetrical tails are adaptations for efficient swimming.

White sharks eat fishes (including sharks), sea birds and mammals, turtles and shellfish.