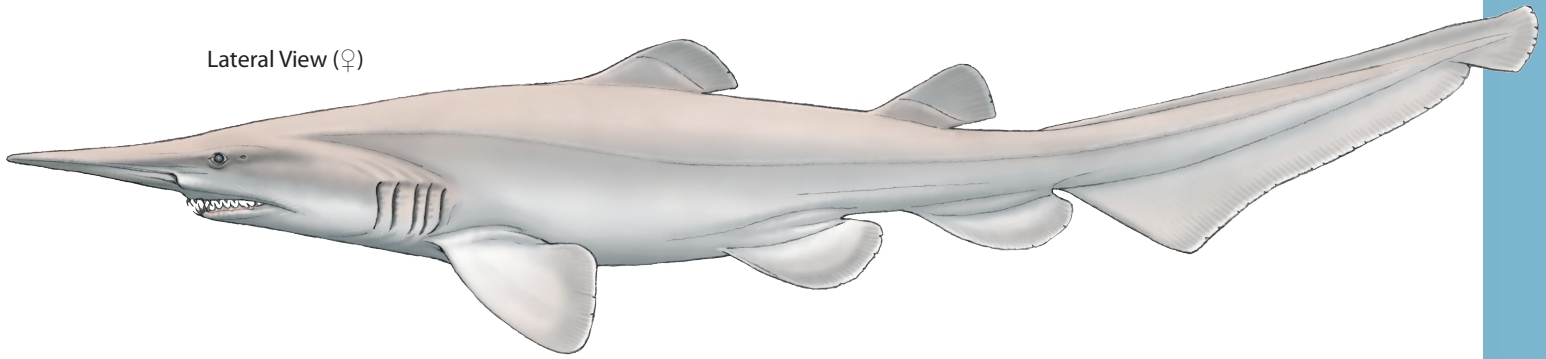
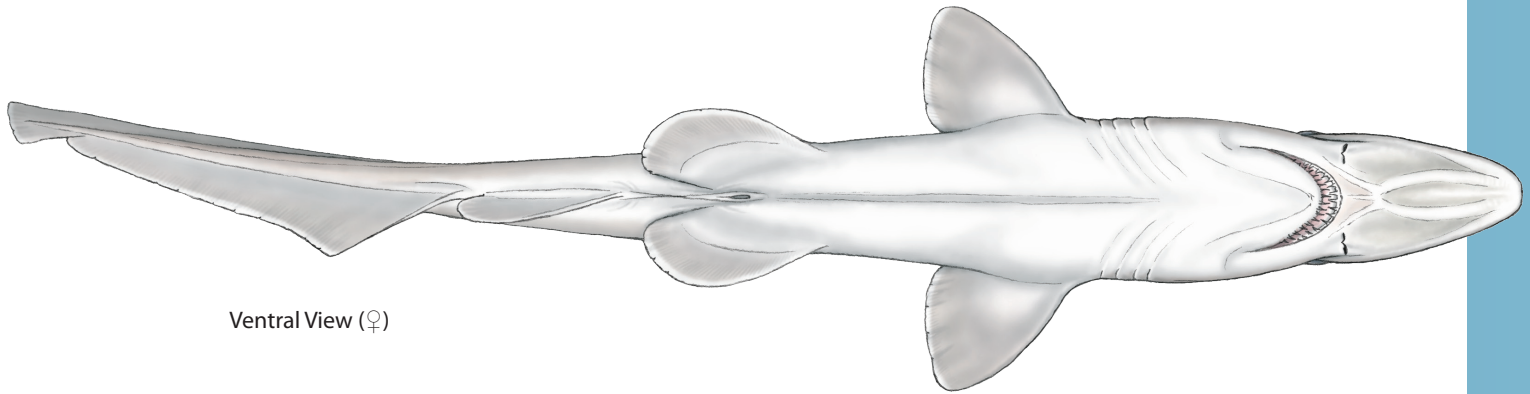


Lateral View (♀)



Ventral View (♀)



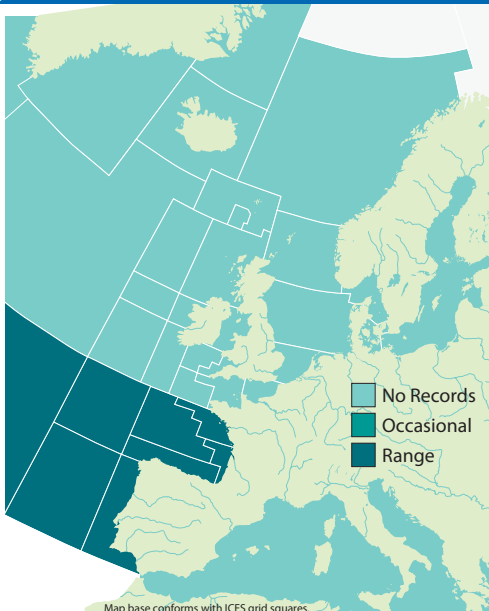
### COMMON NAMES

**Goblin Shark**, Elfin Shark, Requin Lutin (Fr), Tiburón Duende (Es).

### SYNONYMS

*Scapanorhynchus owstoni* (Jordan, 1898), *Odontaspis nasutus* (de Braganza, 1904), *Scapanorhynchus jordani* (Hussakof, 1909), *Scapanorhynchus dofleini* (Engelhardt, 1912), *Scapanorhynchus mitsukurii* (White, 1937).

### DISTRIBUTION



The Goblin Shark has a wide but patchy distribution with occurrences in the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans. In the east Atlantic it is known from the Bay of Biscay to southern Portugal as well as Madeira, Senegal, the Gulf of Guinea and South Africa (Compagno, 2001).

### APPEARANCE

- Flat, blade-like, elongated snout.
- Tiny eyes.
- Five short, wide gill slits.
- Highly protrusible jaws, protrude upon death.
- Two spineless dorsal fins and an anal fin.
- Long caudal fin without ventral lobe.
- Pink-white with bluish fins. No distinguishing markings.
- Large, narrow, awl-shaped teeth. 26 uppers, 24 lowers.

The Goblin Shark is an unmistakable shark with a huge, flat snout and highly protrusible jaws. These jaws are controlled by a double set of ligaments at the mandibular joints. When retracted, these ligaments are stretched and function like a catapult when the jaws are released. This results in dead sharks having highly distinctive protruded jaws. (Jordan, Unknown). The eyes are tiny and the five gill slits are short, although they are wide and seem 'loose'. Two dorsal fins and an anal are present and there are no dorsal spines. The caudal fin is long and slender with no ventral lobe (Compagno, 2001).

The body is uniformly pale white or pinkish, caused by the blood vessels just under the translucent skin. The fins are bluish (Martin, Unknown). There are 26 upper teeth and 24 lower teeth. They are large, narrow, single-cusped and awl-shaped suggesting a diet of predominantly soft-bodied prey. The teeth further back are reduced (Jordan, Unknown).

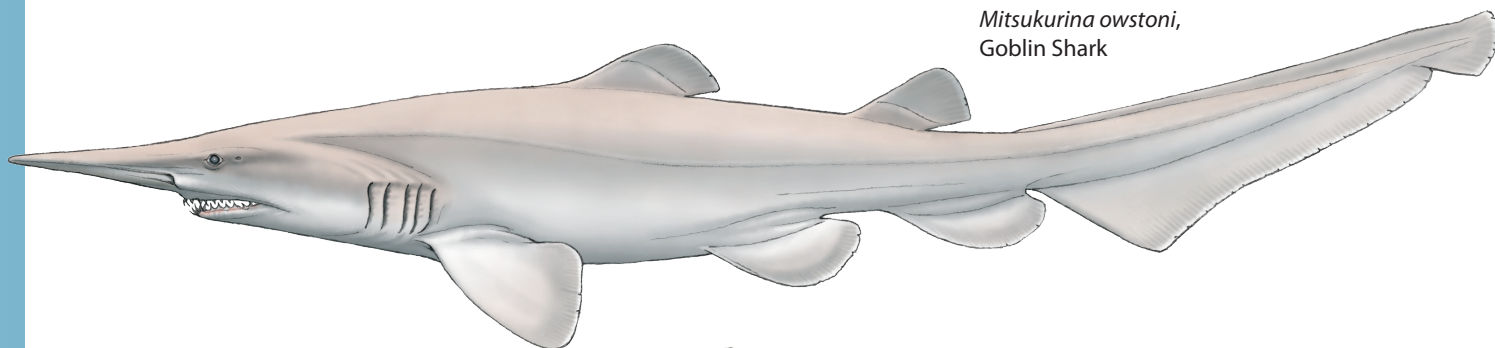
## SIMILAR SPECIES

*Carcharias taurus*, Sandtiger Shark

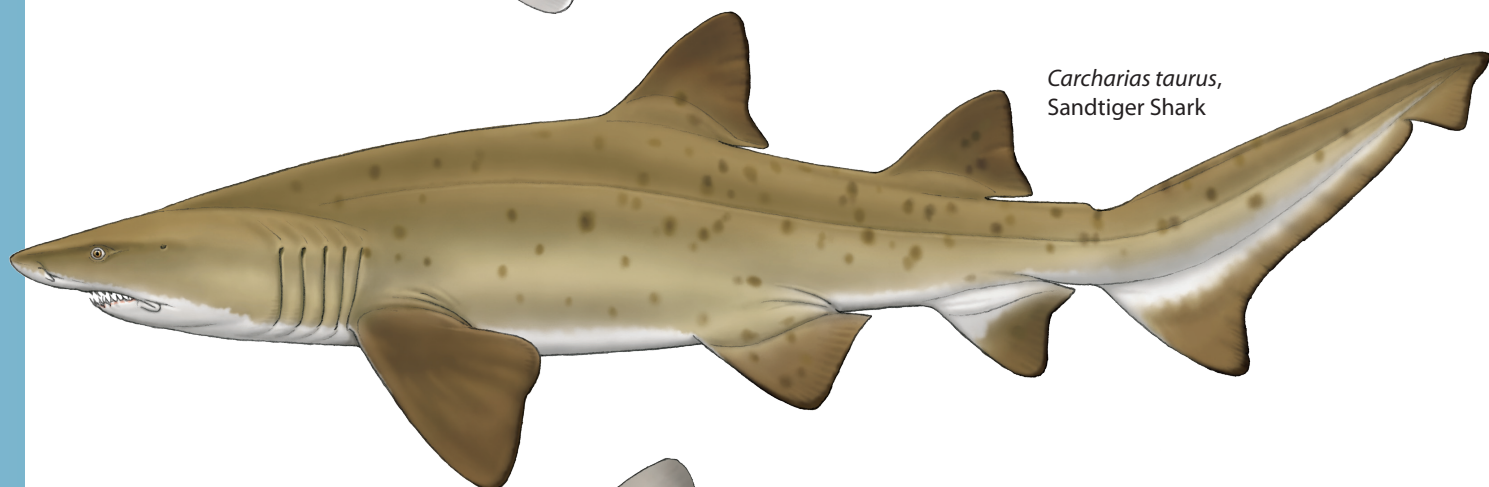
*Odontaspis ferox*, Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark

*Apristurus aphyodes*, White Ghost Catshark

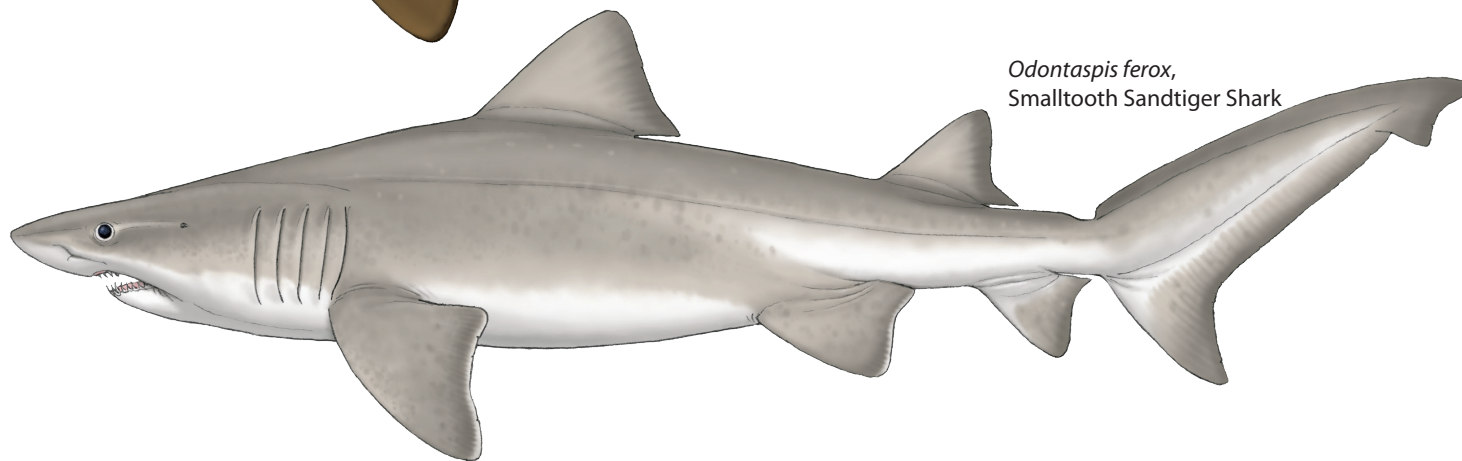
*Mitsukurina owstoni*,  
Goblin Shark



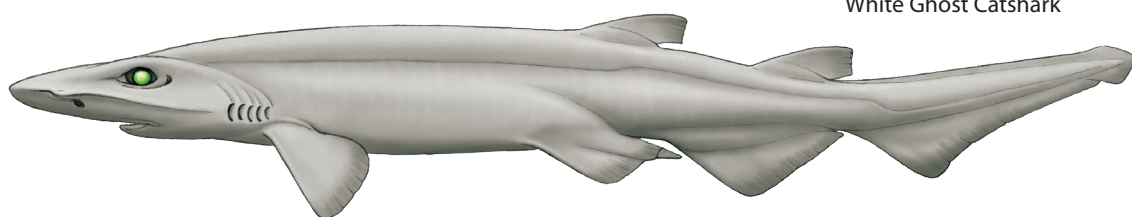
*Carcharias taurus*,  
Sandtiger Shark



*Odontaspis ferox*,  
Smalltooth Sandtiger Shark



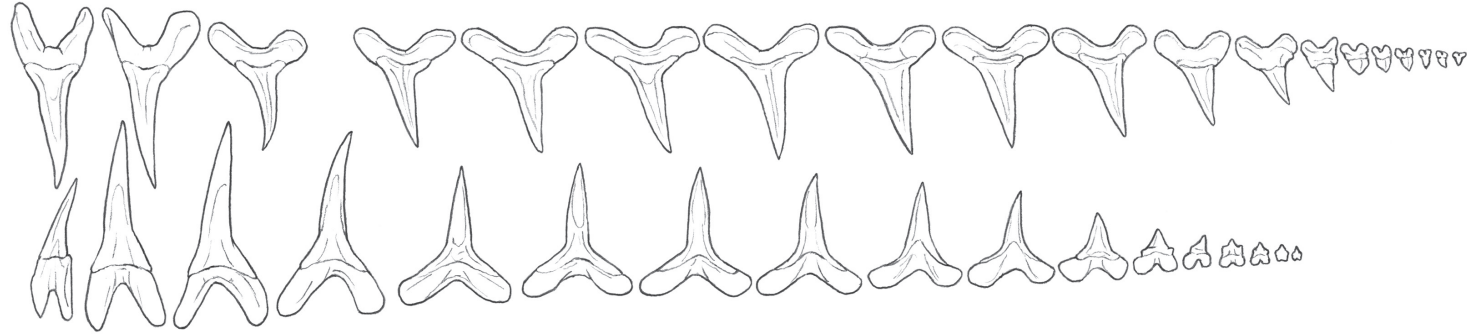
*Apristurus aphyodes*,  
White Ghost Catshark



(Not to scale)

### TEETH

The teeth are very long and narrow with single cusps in both jaws. There are 26 in the upper jaw and 24 in the lower jaw (Jordan, Unknown).



### ECOLOGY AND BIOLOGY

#### HABITAT

The Goblin Shark is a demersal and mesopelagic species on outer continental shelves, upper slopes and seamounts from 95–1,300m, although it is most common 270–960m. As the vast majority of those caught have been immature it has been suggested that the bulk of the population exists out of reach of commercial fisheries. It has been known to occur at the surface although this is extremely rare. Records from seamounts suggest that the species is also oceanic or semi-oceanic (Compagno, 2001).

#### EGGCASE

N/A

#### DIET

The dentition of the Goblin shark suggests that it eats soft bodied prey such as fish, shrimp and squid (Compagno, 2001). A large specimen taken near the surface off California had been feeding on squid. Juveniles taken off New Zealand and South Africa had been feeding on mid-water crustaceans, teleost fish and squid (Duffy et al., 2004).

#### REPRODUCTION

The life history and reproductive strategy of the Goblin Shark is poorly understood. Males become sexually mature at around 264cm total length. It is unknown at what size females become sexually mature. Extrapolating from knowledge of other members of the family, the embryos are probably nourished oophagously and the litter size is likely to be small. The smallest individual so far encountered was 88cm total length (Duffy *et al.*, 2004).

## COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE

A rare bycatch of deepwater gillnet, longline and trawl fisheries, the Goblin Shark has little commercial value for traditional uses. The unusual jaws are sought by collectors however and can sell for US\$1,500-\$4,000, depending on the size and quality of the jaw (Duffy *et al.*, 2004).

## THREATS, CONSERVATION, LEGISLATION

A rare bycatch of deepwater fisheries, the biology and life history of the Goblin Shark are not well understood. In 2003, more than 100 were taken by fishermen off Taiwan in less than a week but it appears this is an isolated incident. Due to the small number of mature specimens taken as bycatch and the small numbers of animals encountered, it is believed the majority of the population exists beyond the range of commercial fisheries and is resistant to fishing pressure (Duffy *et al.*, 2004).

## IUCN RED LIST ASSESSMENT

Least Concern (2004).

## HANDLING AND THORN ARRANGEMENT

- Handle with care.
- Sharp teeth.
- Abrasive skin.

## REFERENCES

- COMPAGNO, L. J. V. 2001. Sharks of the World: An Annotated and Illustrated Catalogue of Shark Species Known to Date. Volume 2. Bullhead, Mackerel and Carpet Sharks (Heterodontiformes, Lamniformes and Orectolobiformes). FAO. Rome, Italy.
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Illustrations: Marc Dando.

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