

Scalloped Hammerhead Shark

 DOMAIN Eukaryota	 KINGDOM Animalia	 PHYLUM Chordata	 CLASS Chondrichthyes
 ORDER Carcharhiniformes	 FAMILY Sphyrnidae	 GENUS Sphyrna	 SPECIES S. lewini

WHERE DO THEY HANG OUT?

Scalloped hammerhead sharks live in warm temperate and tropical oceans worldwide, including the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans. Young sharks grow up in shallow bays, estuaries, and mangroves before moving into deeper offshore waters as adults. They are highly migratory and may travel hundreds or even thousands of miles throughout their lives.



A LOOK FOR THE SPOTLIGHT!

The scalloped hammerhead gets its name from the curved, scalloped shape of its hammer-shaped head, called a cephalofoil. Unlike other hammerheads, it has a central dip and rounded indentations between the eyes. Adults can grow up to 14 feet long and have gray-bronze coloring with a pale underside for camouflage.



WHAT'S ON THE MENU?



Scalloped hammerheads feed on fish, squid, octopus, crustaceans, rays, and smaller sharks.

Their wide-set eyes and specialized electroreceptors help them detect prey, even stingrays buried beneath the sand. They may use their broad heads to pin prey against the seafloor while hunting.



Josh Hallett from Winter Haven, via Wikimedia Commons

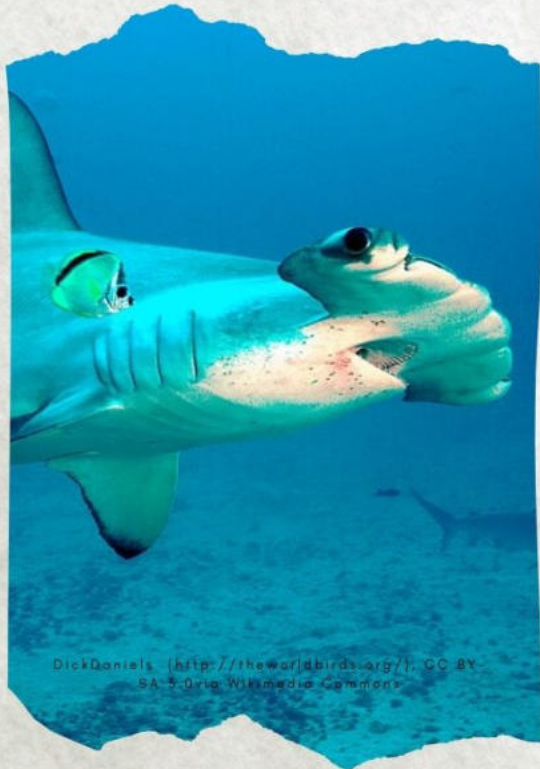
Extinct
EX EW CR EN VU NT LC
Threatened
Least Concern

SOCIAL LIFE & FAMILY

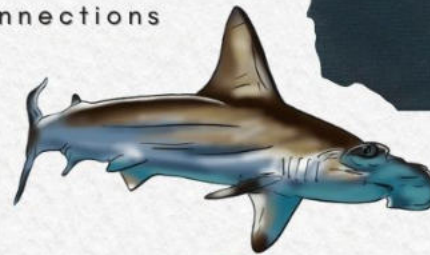
Unlike many sharks, scalloped hammerheads often gather in schools numbering in the hundreds. Females give birth to live young after a 9-12 month gestation period, usually in shallow coastal nursery habitats. Because they mature slowly and do not reproduce every year, populations recover slowly from declines.

CULTURE & CONSERVATION

In Hawai'i, hammerhead sharks (manō kihikihi) are associated with traditional stories and, in some families, ancestral guardians known as 'aumākua. Their dramatic appearance and schooling behavior have also made them favorites among divers, photographers, and wildlife filmmakers. Protecting these sharks helps preserve both marine ecosystems and cultural connections to the ocean.



DickDaniels (http://theworldbirds.org/), CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons



Did you know?

5 FUN FACTS ABOUT SCALLOPED HAMMERHEAD SHARKS



THREATS TO THEIR SURVIVAL



Slow growth
& maturity



Hunting for meat, skin,
teeth, and fins



Entanglement



Fishing
Conflict



Scalloped hammerhead sharks can grow up to about 13 feet and may live around 30 years



Males typically reach maturity at about 10 years old, while females mature later at around 15 years and a larger size



Their ampullae of Lorenzini help them detect electrical signals from hidden prey.



Despite their appearance, scalloped hammerheads are generally not aggressive toward humans.



They can locate stingrays buried beneath the sand and pin them to the seafloor while feeding.