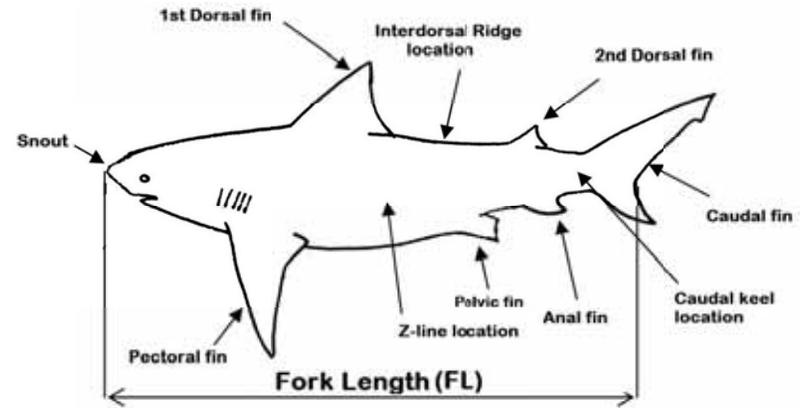


VI. SHARKS

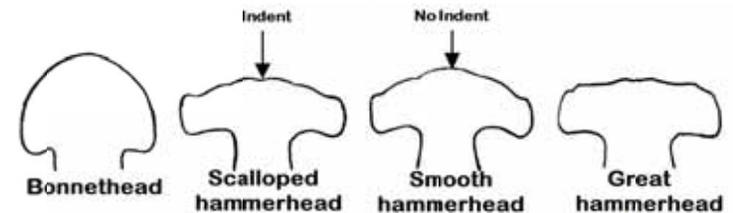
ANATOMY OF A SHARK



IDENTIFICATION OF RIDGEBACK SHARKS



IDENTIFICATION OF HAMMERHEAD SHARKS



Sharks can be difficult to identify, even for experts. To make sure you do not accidentally retain a prohibited species, release any sharks you are not sure you can identify correctly. If the shark has an interdorsal ridge (a ridge of skin on the back between the two dorsal fins), there is a good chance it is a prohibited species and you should release it.

Remember: *If you don't know, let it go.* For help with shark identification, download the Recreational Atlantic HMS Shark ID Placard (<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/species/sharks/index.html>), or contact the Atlantic HMS Management Division at 301-427-8503 to request a waterproof hard copy of the placard.



AUTHORIZED SPECIES⁵¹ (retention allowed)

Large Coastal Sharks (LCS) (non-ridgeback LCS & tiger)		Small Coastal Sharks (SCS)	Pelagic Sharks	Smoothhound Sharks ^{**+}
Blacktip	Lemon	Atlantic sharpnose	Blue*	Smooth dogfish
Bull	Nurse	Blacknose	Oceanic whitetip*+	Florida smoothhound
Hammerhead, great*	Spinner	Bonnethead	Porbeagle	Gulf smoothhound
Hammerhead, scalloped*	Tiger+	Finetooth	Shortfin mako	
Hammerhead, smooth*			Thresher	

+ Ridgeback sharks that have an interdorsal ridge, or visible line of raised skin, between their dorsal fins.

* Anglers cannot possess these sharks while in possession of tunas, billfish or swordfish.⁵²

** Smoothhound sharks will be authorized as of March 15, 2016. Smoothhound sharks are the only species with both a pre-dorsal and an interdorsal ridge.

PROHIBITED SPECIES⁵³ (must be released)

Atlantic angel	Caribbean reef+	Night+	Sixgill
Basking	Caribbean sharpnose	Sandbar+	Smalltail
Bigeye sand tiger	Dusky+	Sand tiger	Whale
Bigeye sixgill	Galapagos+	Sevengill	White*
Bigeye thresher	Longfin mako	Silky+	
Bignose+	Narrowtooth		

* A person may fish for white sharks with rod and reel, but must release the fish immediately, with minimal injury, and without removing it from the water.⁵⁴

+ Ridgeback sharks that have an interdorsal ridge, or visible line of raised skin between their dorsal fins.

PERMITS AND GEARS

Permit	Gear ⁵⁵
1. HMS Angling, ⁵⁶ OR	Handline and Rod and reel
2. HMS Charter/Headboat, ⁵⁷ OR	
3. Atlantic Tunas General category ⁵⁸ OR Swordfish General Commercial ⁵⁹ ONLY if participating in a registered Atlantic HMS tournament.	

SIZE/BAG LIMITS AND SEASONS

Permits	Species	Minimum Size ⁶⁰ (FL)	Trip Bag Limit ^{**61}	Season
HMS Angling, Charter/Headboat, Atlantic Tunas General Category*, or Swordfish General Commercial*	Atlantic sharpnose	None	1 per person	Jan. 1 - Dec. 31
	Bonnethead	None	1 per person	
	Smoothhound Sharks ^{***}	None	None	
	Hammerheads (Great, Smooth, and Scalloped)	78"	1 per vessel	
All other sharks	54"			

* Only if participating in a registered HMS tournament.

** For example, if there are 3 passengers on a trip, the vessel may retain up to 3 Atlantic sharpnose, 3 bonnethead, and 1 hammerhead or other shark (7 sharks total). If a hammerhead shark is retained, no tunas, billfish, or swordfish can be retained.

*** Effective March 15, 2016.

LANDING RESTRICTIONS⁶²

All sharks must be landed intact with the head, tail, and all fins naturally attached. The shark may be gutted and bled at sea (e.g., by making an incision at the base of the tail).⁶³ "Naturally attached" means attached to the shark carcass by at least some portion of uncut skin.⁶⁴

If an Atlantic shark is caught but not kept, it must be released immediately to improve its chances of survival without removing it from the water.⁶⁵

NOAA Fisheries encourages the live release of shortfin mako sharks.

Fishermen can use the "Release Mako" application (app) to report live releases of shortfin mako sharks using their Android or iPhones. The app can be downloaded for free from Google Play or iTunes. Fishermen can also report shortfin mako releases on the Atlantic HMS website www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/shortfinmako.

A vessel that has been issued an Atlantic Tunas General category or Swordfish General Commercial permit may be used to fish recreationally for Atlantic sharks during a registered Atlantic HMS tournament. HMS Angling category regulations for Atlantic sharks apply, including those addressing authorized gears, techniques, bag limits and size limits.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS⁶⁶

- The Large Pelagic Survey (LPS) or Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP, formerly MRFSS) may survey anglers at the dock or by phone.⁶⁷ If contacted, anglers are required to participate in these surveys.
- Anglers in Maryland must report all recreational shark landings, and anglers in North Carolina must report some pelagic shark species, at a state-operated reporting station (state contact information is in Section XI).

RESTRICTED AREAS⁶⁸

- Tortugas Marine Reserves (closed year-round)
- Madison Swanson and Steamboat Lumps closed areas (closed year-round; except for surface trolling, allowed May-October)
- Edges 40 Fathom Contour closed area (closed January-April)

