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# SHARK IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

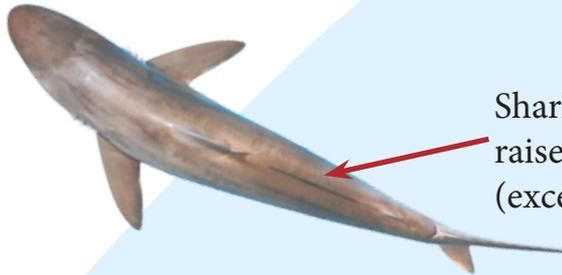
Under the Highly Migratory Species (HMS)  
Commercial Caribbean Small Boat Permit

Shark Species You May Retain	Name	Distinguishing Characteristics
	<b>Tiger</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has interdorsal ridge</li> <li>• Vertical marks on body (fade with age)</li> <li>• Blunt, short snout shorter than mouth width</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> dorsal fin is behind the pectoral fin</li> <li>• 15 feet max length</li> </ul>
	<b>Blacktip</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No interdorsal ridge</li> <li>• Has black tips on most fins, excluding anal fin</li> <li>• Pointed snout</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> dorsal fin slightly overlaps pectoral fin</li> <li>• 8 feet max length</li> </ul>
	<b>Spinner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No interdorsal ridge</li> <li>• Has black tips on most fins, including anal fin</li> <li>• Very pointed snout</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> dorsal fin behind the pectoral fin</li> <li>• 9 feet max length</li> </ul>
	<b>Bull</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No interdorsal ridge</li> <li>• Blunt snout</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> dorsal fin slightly overlaps pectoral fin</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dorsal fin forward of anal fin</li> <li>• 9 feet max length</li> </ul>
	<b>Finetooth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No interdorsal ridge</li> <li>• Grey to blue body</li> <li>• Pointed snout</li> <li>• 5 feet max length</li> </ul>
	<b>Lemon</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No interdorsal ridge</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> dorsal fins same size</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dorsal fin begins above anal fin</li> <li>• 10 feet max length</li> </ul>
<p>Labial furrow</p>	<b>Atlantic sharpnose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No interdorsal ridge</li> <li>• White spots</li> <li>• Pointed snout</li> <li>• Labial furrow</li> <li>• 3 feet max length</li> </ul>
	<b>Smoothhound</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has interdorsal ridge</li> <li>• Pointed snout and oval-shaped eyes</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dorsal fin smaller than 1<sup>st</sup> dorsal</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dorsal fin larger than anal fin</li> <li>• 5 feet max length</li> </ul>
	<b>Bonnethead</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No interdorsal ridge</li> <li>• Shovel-shaped head</li> <li>• Small black spots on body</li> <li>• 4 feet max length</li> </ul>

# Safe Catch & Release of Sharks

## Under the Highly Migratory Species Commercial Caribbean Small Boat Permit

The capture of all species of hammerhead sharks is prohibited.



Sharks with an interdorsal ridge (visible line of raised skin between dorsal fins) are prohibited (except tiger and smoothhound sharks).

## Shark Release Guidelines

- Keep the shark in the water and minimize fight time.
- Position the shark so the current flows toward the head of the animal.
- Do not gaff a shark. Use a leader to hold the shark.
- If you can't remove the hook, cut the leader as close to the hook as possible or cut the hook itself with bolt cutters.

## REMEMBER, ALWAYS RELEASE A SHARK THAT:

- Is not on the list of sharks you may retain
- Is a hammerhead shark
- Has an interdorsal ridge (other than a tiger or smoothhound shark)
- You cannot identify — IF YOU DON'T KNOW LET IT GO!

## More on the HMS Caribbean Small Boat Permit

Authorized Species	Retention Limit (per vessel per trip)	Minimum Size	Authorized Gears
Atlantic yellowfin, bigeye, albacore, and skipjack tunas	10 tunas	Yellowfin and bigeye: 27" CFL No minimum size for albacore and skipjack	Rod and reel, handline, harpoon, greenstick, bandit gear, and buoy gear (yo-yo gear)
Swordfish	18 swordfish	Head on: 47" lower jaw fork length Head removed: 25" cleithrum to caudal keel length	Rod and reel, handline, harpoon, bandit gear, and buoy gear
Sharks	3 authorized sharks	N/A	Rod and reel, handline, and bandit gear

A permit costs \$25 and only valid in the Caribbean.

Vessels must be LESS THAN 45 feet.

Vessel owner/operator must comply with territorial requirements for commercial trip reporting.

To apply, visit [www.fisheries.noaa.gov](http://www.fisheries.noaa.gov)