

# Tiger Shark

## (*Galeocerdo cuvier*)

**EXPLOITATION STATUS** UNDEFINED

Tiger sharks are an important target species in the recreational club-based gamefish fishery. Commercial catches off NSW are likely to be smaller than recreational catches.

**SCIENTIFIC NAME**

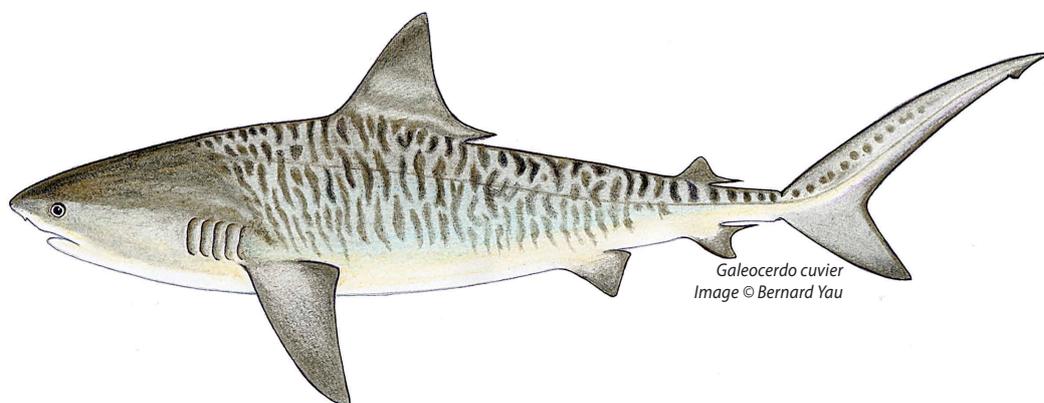
**STANDARD NAME**

**COMMENT**

*Galeocerdo cuvier*

tiger shark

Found along NSW coast, mainly in summer.



### Background

The tiger shark (*Galeocerdo cuvier*) is found in tropical and warmer temperate waters of all the world's oceans. Its Australian distribution includes all northern Australia, extending south to Perth in the west and Bass Strait in the east. Tiger sharks are found from close inshore to well off the continental shelf, with a depth distribution ranging from the surface to 850 m. Satellite telemetry work has found individual tiger sharks are capable of undertaking long migrations. One individual was found to swim from an Australian coral reef directly to Papua New Guinea, then into the Gulf of Carpentaria before being caught in a net 3 months later.

At birth, tiger sharks are 50 to 75 cm in length. Males mature at about 300 cm and females between 287 and 330 cm. Both males and females grow at similar rates, and may reach a total length of 600 cm, and a weight of about 1000 kg. Tiger sharks are lecithotrophic viviparous where the young develop internally from eggs. Litter sizes of tiger sharks vary from 10 to 80, with an average litter size of 35. Breeding and pupping both occur every two years, usually in summer.

A huge variety of dietary items can be found in the stomachs of tiger sharks. Fishes and reptiles (turtles and sea snakes) dominate, with mammals (primarily cetaceans) and dugongs also commonly found.

NSW commercial fisheries land small numbers of tiger sharks, with annual catches ranging between 1 and 6 t. Catches come mostly from the Ocean Trap and Line Fishery, with the Ocean Trawl Fishery contributing only a minor proportion of the catch. Tiger sharks are often released alive due to poor market demand.

The catch of tiger sharks by recreational fishers is probably greater than the commercial catch. Tiger sharks are a favoured target species for some gamefishers, with an estimated 10 t being landed annually. Catches of tiger sharks are correlated with water temperature, as the species moves south with warmer waters.

## Additional Notes

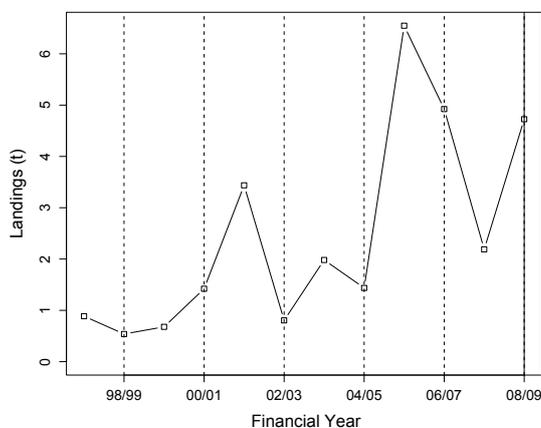
- Tiger sharks are an important target species in the recreational gamefish fishery and a key secondary species in the Ocean Trap and Line Fishery.
- Poor eating qualities result in low commercial landings (recently less than 5 t per annum). The fins are also apparently of comparatively low value.
- Historical NSW recreational gamefish catch information and biological data are available (Chan, 2001).
- Additional biological information is available for tiger sharks (Heithaus, 2001; Randall, 1992; Simpfendorfer, 1992; Stevens, 1984).
- There is a recreational bag limit of one tiger shark.

## Catch

### Recreational Catch of Tiger Shark

The annual recreational harvest of tiger shark in NSW is approximately 10 t. This estimate is based upon data collected by Chan (2001).

### Historical Landings of Tiger Shark



**Commercial landings (including available historical records) of tiger shark for NSW from 1997/98 to 2008/09 for all fishing methods.**

## Further Reading

Chan, R.W.K. (2001). Biological studies on sharks caught off the coast of New South Wales. School of Biological Sciences. Sydney, University of New South Wales. **PhD Thesis**.

Compagno, L.J.V. (1984). Sharks of the World. An annotated and illustrated catalogue of sharks known to date. Part 2 - Carcharhiniformes, FAO.

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Park, T. (2007). [NSW Gamefish Tournament Monitoring. Final Report to Fisheries Research and Development Corporation](#). NSW Fisheries Final Report Series 94. Cronulla, NSW Department of Primary Industries: 121 pp.

Pepperell, J.G. (1992). Trends in the distribution, species composition and size of sharks caught by gamefish anglers off south-eastern Australia, 1961-90. *Australian Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research* **43** (1): 213-225.

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Simpfendorfer, C. (1992). Biology of tiger sharks (*Galeocerdo cuvier*) caught by the Queensland Shark Meshing Program off Townsville, Australia. *Australian Journal of Marine and Freshwater Research* **43** (1): 33-43.

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Walker, T.I. (1998). Can shark resources be harvested sustainably? A question revisited with a review, of shark fisheries. *Marine and Freshwater Research* **49** (7): 553-572.

Please visit the CSIRO website, <http://www.marine.csiro.au/caab/> and search for the species code (CAAB) 37 296001, common name or scientific name to find further information.