

Whiskery Shark, *Furgaleus macki*

Report Card assessment	Sustainable		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Endemic to Australia	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Least Concern
Assessors	Simpfendorfer, C., McAuley, R.B. & Harry, A.V.		
Report Card Remarks	Caught for the flesh; population slowly recovering after depletion with current catches below acceptable levels		

Summary

The Whiskery Shark is endemic to south and southwest Australia. It is caught in commercial gillnet fisheries with the flesh sold mostly in Australia. The species was historically reduced to 20–52% of



unexploited biomass but the stock has been stable for about three generations (~30 years). The fishery is now tightly managed and regular monitoring occurs with the current catch considered to be below acceptable levels and the population is slowly increasing. Therefore, the species is assessed as Least Concern (IUCN) and Sustainable (SAFS).

Distribution

The Whiskery Shark occurs from North West Cape (Western Australia) south through southern Australia and to eastern Victoria, including northern Tasmania (Last and Stevens 2009).

Stock structure and status

The Whiskery Shark is found in greatest abundance off southwestern Australia from Albany to Kalbarri (Western Australia), and is rare off southeast Australia (Victoria and Tasmania). The species was historically reduced to 20–52% of virgin biomass within three generations (~30 years) (Simpfendorfer et al. 2000a). However, due to management changes that include effort restrictions, the current population has stabilized in 2010–2011 and is slowly increasing.

Fisheries

The Whiskery Shark is caught in commercial gillnet fisheries with the flesh primarily sold in Australia and it has been caught in Western Australia since the 1940s (Simpfendorfer and Donohue 1998). Historically, catches of the Whiskery Shark in Western Australia exceeded 600 t in the 1980s, but catch is currently around 100 t which is well below catch levels considered acceptable for the species (Simpfendorfer et al. 2000b, Braccini *et al.* 2014). Smaller quantities (up to a maximum of approximately 50 t) are also caught by commercial gillnet fisheries in South Australian waters (Walker and Gason 2009). The Whiskery Shark is also caught by recreational fishers but the levels are negligible compared to commercial quantities (Ryan et al. 2013).

Habitat and biology

The Whiskery Shark is most commonly found in rocky reef seagrass areas on the shelf from inshore waters to depths of 220 m (Last and Stevens 2009). Litter sizes are 4-29 pups with females giving birth every second year (Simpfendorfer and Unsworth 1998, Simpfendorfer et al. 2000a).

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity estimated 15 years Max size: 150 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: 4.5 years, ~110 cm TL Females: 6.5 years, ~110 cm TL

Link to IUCN Page: <http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/39351/0>

Link to page at Shark References: <http://www.shark-references.com/species/view/Furgaleus-macki>

References

- Braccini, M., McAuley, R. and O'Malley, J. 2014. Temperate Demersal Gillnet and Demersal Longline Fisheries Status Report. In: Fletcher, W.J. and Santoro, K. (eds), Status Reports of the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of Western Australia 2013/14: The State of the Fisheries, pp. 263-274. Department of Fisheries, Western Australia.
- Last, P.R. and Stevens, J.D. 2009. Sharks and Rays of Australia. Second Edition. CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood.
- Ryan, K.L., Wise, B.S., Hall, N.G., Pollock, K.H., Sulin, E.H. and Gaughan, D.J. 2013. An integrated system to survey boat-based recreational fishing in Western Australia 2011/12. Fisheries Research Report No. 249. Department of Fisheries, Western Australia, Perth.
- Simpfendorfer C.A. and Donohue, K. 1998. Keeping the fish in 'fish and chips': research and management of the Western Australian shark fishery. *Marine and Freshwater Research* 49: 593-600.
- Simpfendorfer, C.A., Chidlow, J., McAuley, R.B. and Unsworth, P. 2000a. Age and growth of the whiskery shark, *Furgaleus macki* from southwestern Australia. *Environmental Biology of Fishes* 58: 335-343.
- Simpfendorfer, C.A., Donohue, K. and Hall, N. 2000b. Stock assessment and risk analysis for the whiskery shark (*Furgaleus macki* (Whitley)) in south-western Australia. *Fisheries Research* 47: 1-17.
- Simpfendorfer, CA and Unsworth, P. 1998. Reproductive biology of the whiskery shark, *Furgaleus macki*, from south-western Australia. *Marine and Freshwater Research* 49: 687-693.
- Walker, T.I. and Gason, A.S. 2009. SESSF monitoring data management, reporting and documentation 2006/07. Final report to Australian Fisheries Management Authority. Project No. R2006/812. June 2009. vii + 177 pp. Primary Industries Research Victoria, Department of Primary Industries, Queenscliff, Victoria, Australia.