

Western Spotted Gummy Shark, *Mustelus stevensi*

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| Report Card assessment | Sustainable | | |
| IUCN Red List Australian Assessment | Endemic to Australia | IUCN Red List Global Assessment | Least Concern |
| Assessors | McAuley, R.B. & Kyne, P.M. | | |
| Report Card Remarks | Minor bycatch with refuge from fisheries | | |

Summary

The Western Spotted Gummy Shark is a slender shark endemic to northwest Australia waters. It ranges from the continental shelf into deeper upper slope waters. It was a minor bycatch of the Western Australian West Coast Demersal Gillnet and Demersal Longline Fishery. However, spatial closures implemented in 1993 mean it may no longer be caught by that fishery. The species may be a bycatch in the offshore Commonwealth managed fisheries operating off northwest Australia, however effort is low in these fisheries. Little is known about the life history characteristics of this recently described species but it is reportedly abundant. Therefore, the Western Spotted Gummy Shark is assessed as Least Concern (IUCN) and Sustainable (SAFS).



Distribution

The Western Spotted Gummy Shark is endemic to Western Australia, where it occurs from southwest of Shark Bay to northwest of Cape Leveque (White and Last 2008, Last and Stevens 2009).

Stock structure and status

The species is reportedly abundant within its range (Last and Stevens 2009). There is currently no other information on population size, structure, or trend for the species.

Fisheries

The threat to the Western Spotted Gummy Shark from fishing is likely to be minimal because it is not targeted and if taken as bycatch, the catches are minor. The species was known to be a very minor bycatch in the Western Australian West Coast Demersal Gillnet and Demersal Longline Fishery (R. McAuley unpubl. data). However, these catches are likely to have reduced since shark fishing was prohibited north of Steep Point in 1993 and the species may no longer be caught by this fishery. The species' range occurs within the Pilbara Fish Trawl fishery but it has not been recorded as bycatch in that fishery despite extensive sampling (Stephenson and Chidlow 2003). It may be a bycatch in the Commonwealth Deepwater Trawl Fisheries, however, these are very low effort fisheries (Marton and Mazur 2014a, b).

Habitat and ecology

The species occurs on the outer continental shelf and upper slope mainly at depths of 121 to 402 m, although one specimen has been recorded from 735 m (White and Last 2008). The maximum size is 103 cm total length (TL) and both sexes mature at approximately 60 cm TL (Last and Stevens 2009). Little else is known about its biology.

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| Longevity and maximum size | Longevity: unknown Max size: 103 cm TL |
| Age and/or size at maturity (50%) | Both sexes: ~60 cm TL |

Link to IUCN Page: <http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/42716/0>

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

References

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