

Whitefin Swellshark, *Cephaloscyllium albipinum*

Report Card assessment	Depleted		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Critically Endangered (Endemic to Australia)	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Critically Endangered
Assessors	Pardo, S.A., Dulvy, N.K., Barratt, P.J. & Kyne, P.M.		
Australian Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T. & Simpfendorfer, C.A. (Shark Action Plan)		
Report Card Remarks	Management measures may be needed to recover the species.		

Summary

The Whitefin Swellshark is a benthic catshark endemic to southern Australia on the outer continental shelf and upper slope. It is susceptible to trawling and is a common component of bycatch off southern Australia. Most of its range is subjected to intensive trawling. Steep population declines of approximately 75% across two-thirds of the species' range have occurred. The South East Trawl Fishery operated for several decades prior to the period over which



these declines were documented and hence the overall extent of decline is likely to be greater. The species is also captured across its full depth range in the Great Australian Bight Trawl Fishery. Together, these two trawl fisheries capture the species across its entire geographic and depth range. Management measures may be needed to recover this endemic species. Therefore, the species is assessed as Critically Endangered (IUCN) (Kyne et al. 2021) and Depleted (SAFS).

Distribution

The Whitefin Swellshark is found off southern Australia from Batemans Bay (New South Wales) to Eucla (Western Australia), including Tasmania (Last et al. 2008, Last and Stevens 2009).

Stock structure and status

The Whitefin Swellsharks catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE) in observer data from the South East Trawl Fishery (SETF) steadily decreased from 1994–2006 by approximately 75% (Walker and Gason 2007). This trawl fishery had been in place for decades before any data on abundance was available, hence it is reasonable to expect that a similar decline rate occurred in the past.

Fisheries

This demersal shark is susceptible to capture by trawlers and is a common component of trawl bycatch off southern Australia (Last and Stevens 2009). It is the third most commonly caught chondrichthyan in the SETF, accounting for 6% of the total chondrichthyan catch (Walker and Gason 2007). The SETF encompasses the narrow depth range occupied by the Whitefin Swellshark and the species is caught in large numbers with 10% being retained (39.6 t annually) and the remainder being discarded (345.6t annually; Walker and Gason 2007). Their post-release mortality is unknown. Fishing effort on the New South Wales upper slope remains high and ongoing (Penney et al. 2014). The Great Australian Bight Trawl Fishery (GABTF) also fishes throughout the western part of its distribution, and also covers the entirety of the Whitefin Swellshark's depth range.

Habitat and biology

The Whitefin Swellshark is a stocky benthic catshark found on the outer continental shelf and upper slope at depths of 126–554 m (Last et al. 2008). Maximum size is 110 cm total length (TL) (Last and Stevens 2009). Males mature by 70 cm TL and females mature by 98 cm TL (Last and Stevens 2009). Little is known of its biology.

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: unknown Max size: 110 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: 70 cm TL Females: 98 cm TL

CAAB Code: 37 015013

Link to IUCN Page: <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/42706/68615830>

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

References

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- Last, P.R., Motomura, H. and White, W.T. 2008. *Cephaloscyllium albipinnum* sp. nov., a new swellshark (Carcharhiniformes: Scyliorhinidae) from southeastern Australia. CSIRO Marine and Atmospheric Research Paper 22: 147–157.
- Penney, A., Moore, A., Flood, M., Georgeson, L. and Curtotti, R. 2014. *Commonwealth Trawl and Scalefish Hook sectors*. In: Georgeson, L., Stobutzki, I. and Curtotti, R. (eds), Fishery Status Reports 2013–14, pp. 128–213. Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra.
- Walker, T.I. and Gason, A.S. 2007. *Shark and other chondrichthyan byproduct and bycatch estimation in the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery*. Final report to Fisheries and Research Development Corporation Project No. 2001/007. July 2007. vi + 182 pp. Primary Industries Research Victoria, Queenscliff, Victoria, Australia.