

## Speckled Swellshark, *Cephaloscyllium speccum*

Report Card assessment	Negligible		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Least Concern* (Endemic to Australia)	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Data Deficient
Assessors	Kyne, P.M. & Cavanagh, R.D.		
Australian Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T. & Simpfendorfer, C.A. (Shark Action Plan)		
Report Card Remarks	Known only from a few specimens.		

\*The Australian assessment status is more recent than the Global assessment and the shift from DD to LC aligns with a less evidentiary and more precautionary approach to Red List assessments rather than any new available information.

### Summary

The Speckled Catshark is a poorly-known endemic deepwater catshark, with a patchy occurrence in a restricted area off northwest Australia. It is only known from a few specimens recorded from the outer continental shelf. Presently, there is low fishing effort within its distribution. Nothing is known of its biology. The distribution and status needs to be better defined. The species is rarely, if ever, caught in fisheries. Therefore, the species is assessed as Least Concern (IUCN) (Kyne et al. 2021) and Negligible (SAFS).



Source: CSIRO National Fish Collection. License: CC BY Attribution

### Distribution

The Speckled Swellshark is restricted to a relatively small area between Rowley Shoals and Ashmore Reef off northwest Australia where its occurrence is patchy (Last et al. 2008, Last and Stevens 2009).

### Stock structure and status

The species is rare in museum collections and is most likely rare to uncommon in the wild. There is currently no information on population size, structure, or trend for the species.

### Fisheries

The areas where the few known specimens were collected are subject to minimal fishing effort by the Commonwealth North West Slope Trawl Fishery (Marton and Mazur 2014). Species may be naturally rare, but no major threats are apparent at present.

### Habitat and biology

The Speckled Swellshark is a deepwater benthic species on the outer continental shelf and upper slope at depths of 150–455 m. Maximum size is at least 69 cm total length (TL) with males mature at 65 cm TL (Last et al. 2008, Last and Stevens 2009). Nothing else is known of the biology of the species.

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: unknown Max size: at least 69 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: 65 cm TL Females: unknown

**CAAB Code:** 37 015033

**Link to IUCN Page:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/42710/68616428>

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

#### References

- Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T. and Simpfendorfer, C.A. 2021. *The Action Plan for Australian Sharks and Rays 2021*. National Environmental Science Program, Marine Biodiversity Hub, Hobart
- Last, P.R. and Stevens, J.D. 2009. *Sharks and Rays of Australia*. Second Edition. CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood, Australia.
- Last, P.R., Séret, B. and White, W.T. 2008. New swellsharks (*Cephaloscyllium*: Scyliorhinidae) from the Indo-Australian region. CSIRO Marine and Atmospheric Research Paper 22: 129–146.
- Marton, N. and Mazur, K. 2014. North West Slope Trawl Fishery. In: Georgeson, L. Stobutzki, I. and Curtotti, R. (eds), *Fishery status reports 2013–14*, pp. 84-90. Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, Canberra.