

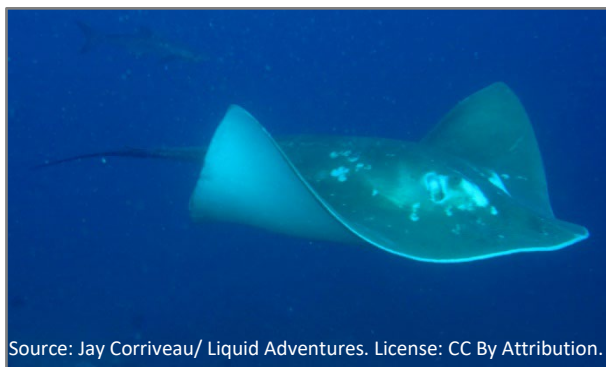
Smalleye Stingray, *Megatrygon microps*

Report Card assessment	Undefined Stock		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Data Deficient	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Data Deficient
Global Assessors	Fahmi, White, W.T., Manjaji Matsumoto, B.M. & Pierce, S.J.		
Australian Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T., Simpfendorfer, C.A. (Shark Action Plan) & Rigby, C.L.		
Report Card Remarks	Poorly-known; information needed on range, catch levels, habitat and biology.		

Summary

The Smalleye Stingray is a large poorly-known benthopelagic ray that occurs in tropical northern Australia and patchily across the Indo-West Pacific. It is rarely captured which may be as its naturally rare or due to its semi-pelagic nature which may reduce interactions with fishing gear. When incidentally caught it retained for its meat in at least Indonesia. It was assessed as at medium risk from the Gulf of Papua Prawn Trawl Fishery, Papua New

Guinea as it has an estimated low recovery potential due to its large size and low productivity with only one pup per litter. In Australia, it is known from three separate locations, northeast Queensland, part of the Northern Territory, and on the Northwest Shelf, Western Australia, and it may be more widespread. It is encountered in the Northern Prawn Fishery. If caught it would be released as elasmobranch retention is prohibited, although post-release mortality is unknown, and the use of bycatch reduction devices have reduced the catch of large rays such as this species by 94%. It may also be taken in other state and Territory fisheries. Given its depth range and preferred habitat are poorly known and that it is rare and has low productivity, it is not possible to ascertain the level of fisheries interaction and its resilience to fisheries. Thus, it is not possible to determine if fishing is causing a population reduction. As there is currently inadequate information available to assess the status, the Smalleye Stingray is assessed globally and in Australia as Data Deficient (IUCN) (Kyne et al. 2021) and Undefined Stock (SAFS).



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Distribution

The Smalleye Stingray occurs in tropical waters of northern Australia and patchily across the Indo-West Pacific from Papua New Guinea to South Africa (Last et al. 2016, Ebert et al. 2021). In Australia, it has a been recorded from three separate locations: from Cairns to Townsville (Queensland), from Nhulunbuy to Darwin (Northern Territory), and in the Montebello Marine Park on the Northwest Shelf

(Western Australia), though it may occur more widely (Last et al. 2016, Kyne et al. 2021, Keesing et al. 2022).

Stock structure and status

There is currently no information on population size, structure, or trend for the species. The species is rarely seen and may be naturally rare or infrequently encountered in catches due to its semi-pelagic nature (Fahmi et al. 2016).

Fisheries

The Smalleye Stingray is infrequently taken incidentally across the Indo-Pacific in a wide variety of fishing gears and retained for its meat in Indonesia and possibly elsewhere (White et al. 2006, Fahmi et al. 2016). It was assessed as at medium risk from the Gulf of Papua Prawn Trawl Fishery, Papua New Guinea (Baje et al. 2021). In Australia, it is reported from the Commonwealth Northern Prawn Fishery (NPF) but at likely low levels as it was not recorded in extensive NPF surveys or included in the NPF risk assessment (Stobutzki et al. 2000, Griffiths et al. 2007). If caught it would be released as elasmobranch retention is prohibited in the NPF, although post-release mortality is unknown, and the mandatory use of bycatch reduction devices (BRDs) since 2001 has dramatically reduced the capture of large rays (>100 cm TL) by 94%, though they are less effective at excluding smaller rays (Brewer et al. 2006). It may also be incidentally caught in other Queensland and Northern Territory fisheries. Two individuals were caught in 2017 in research trawl surveys off the Northwest Shelf (Keesing et al. 2022).

Habitat and biology

The Smalleye Stingray is benthopelagic on the continental shelf at depths of 0–200 m, though it may occur deeper and its preferred habitat is not known; it also occurs in river mouths (Fahmi et al. 2016). Maximum size is 222 cm disc width (DW) and exceeding 300 cm total length (Last et al. 2016). Size at maturity is unknown, though a 204 cm DW female was mature (Keesing et al. 2022). Litter size is one pup (Pierce et al. 2008, Last et al. 2016).

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: unknown Max size: 222 cm DW
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Unknown

CAAB Code: 37 035028

Link to IUCN Page: <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/161582/104166533>

Link to page at Shark References: <https://shark-references.com/species/view/Megatrygon-microps>

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