Blotched Skate, *Notoraja sticta*

Report Card assessment	**Negligible**		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Least Concern (Endemic to Australia)	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Least Concern
Global Assessors	Beckmann, C. & Huveneers, C.		
Australian Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T., Simpfendorfer, C.A. (Shark Action Plan) & Rigby, C.L.		
Report Card Remarks	Occurs deeper than current fisheries operations and assessed as at low risk.		

Summary

The Blotched Skate is a small poorly-known deepwater ray endemic to temperate southern Australia where it occurs in a relatively restricted range in the Great Australian Bight. It is only known from limited specimens and was rarely caught when it was an incidental catch of the Great Australian Bight Trawl Sector of the Southern and Eastern Scalefish Fishery (SESSF). Since 2007, fishing deeper than 700 m in most of the SESSF has been prohibited and thus this species now occurs beyond the depth of current fishing operations. It was assessed as at low risk from both fishing and climate change. Therefore, the Blotched Skate is assessed as Least Concern (IUCN) (Kyne et al. 2021) and Negligible (SAFS) in Australia.

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Distribution

The Blotched Skate is endemic to temperate waters of southern Australia where it occurs in a relatively restricted range in the Great Australian Bight from Ceduna (South Australia) to Eucla (Western Australia) (Last and Stevens 2009, Last et al. 2016).

Stock structure and status

There is currently no information on population size, structure, or trend for the species. It is known from only a limited number of specimens and was rarely caught (McEachran and Last 2008, Last et al. 2016, Kyne et al. 2021).

Fisheries

The Blotched Skate was a rare incidental catch of the Great Australian Bight Trawl (GABT) Sectors in the Commonwealth Southern and Eastern Scalefish Fishery (SESSF) where fishing below 700 m occurred targeting Orange Roughy (*Hoplostethus atlanticus*) (Last et al. 2016, Kyne et al. 2021). Since 2007, fishing deeper than 700 m has been prohibited in most SESSF waters and as the species occurs

at 820–1,000 m, its known spatial and depth range now occur beyond the depth of current fishing operations. The species vulnerability to fishing and climate change was assessed as low (Walker et al. 2021).

Habitat and biology

The Blotched Skate is demersal on the continental slope at depths of 820–1,200 m (Last et al. 2016). Maximum size is at least 63 cm total length (TL) with males mature at approximately 52 cm TL (McEachran and Last 2008). Little else is known of its biology.

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: unknown Max size: at least 63 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: approximately 52 cm TL Females: unknown

CAAB Code: 37 031020
Link to IUCN Page: https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/195468/68637552
Link to page at Shark References: https://shark-references.com/species/view/Notoraja-sticta

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., White, W., Carvalho, M.R. de, Séret, B., Stehmann, M. and Naylor, G.J.P. 2016. *Rays of the World*. CSIRO Publishing, Clayton, Victoria, Australia.

McEachran, J.D. and Last, P.R. 2008. *New deepwater skates of the genus* Notoraja *(Rajoidei: Arhynchobatidae) from southern Australia and the eastern Indian Ocean*. pp. 155-172. In: P.R. Last, W.T. White, J.J. Pogonoski and D.C. Gledhill (eds), Descriptions of new Australian skates (Batoidea: Rajoidei). CSIRO Marine and Atmospheric Research Paper no. 021.

Walker, T.I., Day, R.W., Awruch, C.A., Bell, J.D., Braccini, J.M., Dapp, D.R., Finotto, L., Frick, L.H., Garcés-García, K.C., Guida, L., Huveneers, C., Martins, C.L., Rochowski, B.E.A., Tovar-Ávila, J., Trinnie, F.I. and Reina, R.D. 2021. Ecological vulnerability of the chondrichthyan fauna of southern Australia to the stressors of climate change, fishing and other anthropogenic hazards. *Fish and Fisheries* 22(5), 1105–1135.