

Pelagic Stingray, *Pteroplatytrygon violacea*

Report Card assessment	Sustainable		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Least Concern	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Least Concern
Global Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Barreto, R., Carlson, J., Fernando, D., Francis, M.P., Fordham, S., Jabado, R.W., Liu, K.M., Marshall, A., Pacoureau, N., Romanov, E., Sherley, R.B. & Winker, H.		
Australian Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T., Simpfendorfer, C.A. (Shark Action Plan) & Rigby, C.L.		
Report Card Remarks	Australian fishing pressure low and significant refuge across its range.		

Summary

The Pelagic Stingray is a medium-sized and common pelagic ray species that is globally distributed throughout tropical and temperate offshore waters. It is incidentally caught in pelagic longline fisheries and is mostly released but is retained in some areas for its meat. The species has moderately biological productivity, maturing early at 2–3 years, providing it some resilience to fishing pressure. In Australia, it is caught in the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) and the Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery (WTBF) and released. However, post-release mortality may be high due to jaw damage sustained during handling. Fishing effort and the number of active vessels in these two fisheries has significantly declined in recent decades and the area of operation is relatively small. Combined with the network of marine parks around Australia, the Pelagic Stingray has considerable refuge from fishing. Further, the species is considered at low risk from fishing in both the ETBF and the WTBF. The species is assessed as at Least Concern (IUCN) globally and in Australia (Kyne et al. 2021), and Sustainable (SAFS) in Australia.



The Pelagic Stingray is circumglobal throughout tropical and temperate pelagic waters (Kyne et al. 2019). It has an Australia wide distribution in all offshore waters (Last et al. 2016).

Distribution

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Stock structure and status

The Pelagic Stingray is a common species and its relative abundance appears to fluctuate globally with no consistent population trend, although it is not considered threatened as it is widespread and has an apparent resilience to fisheries due to moderate biological productivity (Kyne et al. 2019). In Australia, the population is considered stable as fishing effort is managed and limited and it has considerable refuge from fisheries (Kyne et al. 2021).

Fisheries

The Pelagic Stingray is commonly caught incidentally around the world in pelagic longline fisheries, and to a lesser extent in pelagic gillnet and trawl fisheries (Kyne et al. 2019). It is mostly released but is retained and used in some areas, such as Indonesia, for its meat and cartilage (White et al. 2006, Kyne et al. 2019). In Australia, it is an incidental catch of the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) and the Western Tuna and Billfish Fishery (WTBF) (Zhou et al. 2009, Sporcic et al. 2018). It is released, however post-release mortality can be high due to damage to the jaws from on-board handling (Sporcic et al. 2018, Kyne et al. 2019). Fishing effort and the number of active vessels in these tuna and billfish fisheries has declined significantly in recent decades with a reduction in vessels from around 152 in 1999 to 35 in 2021 (ETBF) and a peak of 50 in 2000 to <5 vessels since 2005 (WTBF) (Patterson et al. 2022). Although the two fisheries combined encompass the entire Australian Exclusive Economic Zone, the actual area of operation is much smaller and there are substantial parts of the species' Australian range that are not fished (Patterson et al. 2022). These areas combined with the network of marine parks around Australia species would provide considerable refuge for the species (Kyne et al. 2021, Parks Australia 2023). The Pelagic Stingray was considered at low risk of overfishing in the ETBF and WTBF due to estimated fishing mortality being below levels leading to population reduction (Zhou et al. 2009, Sporcic et al. 2018).

Habitat and biology

The Pelagic Stingray is pelagic and mostly occurs from the surface to 100 m depth over deep water though it has been reported to a depth of 381 m (Weigmann 2016, Kyne et al. 2019). It is possibly the only stingray occurring in the offshore oceanic habitat (Last and Stevens 2009). Maximum size is 90 cm disc width (DW) and maximum age estimated to 10 years (Junior and Rotundo 2012, Kyne et al. 2019). Males mature at 2 years and 35–41 cm DW and females at 3 years and 39–50 cm DW (Kyne et al. 2019). Litter sizes are 2–13 pups (Kyne et al. 2019).

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: estimated 10 years Max size: 80 cm DW
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: 2 years, 35–41 cm DW Females: 3 years, 39–50 cm DW

CAAB Code: 37 035010

Link to IUCN Page: <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/161731/896169>

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

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