

## Eastern Angelshark, *Squatina albipunctata*

<b>Report Card assessment</b>	<b>Depleting</b>		
IUCN Red List Australian Assessment	Vulnerable (Endemic to Australia)	IUCN Red List Global Assessment	Vulnerable
Assessors	Pogonoski, J., Pollard, D. & Rigby, C.L.		
Australian Assessors	Kyne, P.M., Heupel, M.R., White, W.T. & Simpfendorfer, C.A. (Shark Action Plan)		
Report Card Remarks	Significant population reductions in fished part of range, remains a marketable bycatch in southern part of its range.		

### Summary

The Eastern Angelshark is an endemic species that occurs in eastern Australia. It has been heavily fished and utilized in the southern parts of its range where it is a byproduct species. There have been dramatic population reductions in the fished part of its range. The fishery responsible for the declines remains active with no conservation measures currently in place. Infrequent captures have been reported from



the more northern part of its range where it is discarded bycatch in the Queensland East Coast trawl fishery. There have been significant population declines, however not all of its range is subject to heaving fishing pressure. Therefore, the species is assessed as Vulnerable (IUCN) (Kyne et al. 2021) and Depleting (SAFS).

### Distribution

The Eastern Angelshark is an Australian endemic species distributed from the Cairns region (Queensland) southwards to Lakes Entrance (Victoria) (Last and Stevens 2009).

### Stock structure and status

There are no estimates of population size of this species but population declines of 96% in their relative abundance have been reported for the New South Wales part of its distribution over two decades (1977–1997; Graham et al. 2001).

### Fisheries

Demersal trawling within the New South Wales (NSW) Prawn Trawl Fishery and the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery (SESSF) in southeast Australia between northern Victoria and central New South Wales continues to threaten its populations in the southern part of its range. It is often retained in these fisheries as a marketable byproduct. Declines of 96% in relative abundance occurred over two decades (1976–77 to 1996–97) from the Sydney area (central NSW) to the Eden/ Gabo Island Area (southern NSW/ Victoria border) (Graham et al. 2001). In addition, significant reductions in the mean sizes of large Eastern Angelsharks were observed (Graham et al. 2001). This area only represents approximately a quarter of the total range of the species. It is rarely captured in the northern half of its range; it is taken as bycatch (and discarded) in low numbers in the Queensland East Coast Otter Trawl Fishery (deepwater eastern king prawn sector; Rigby et al. 2016).

### Habitat and biology

The Eastern Angelshark is a demersal species that occurs on the outer continental shelf and upper slope in 35–415 m depths (Last and Stevens 2009). The known maximum size is 130 cm total length (TL) with males mature by 91 cm TL and females at around 107 cm TL (Graham et al. 1997, Graham 1999, Last and Stevens 2009, K. Graham, The Australian Museum, pers. comm. 2003).

Longevity and maximum size	Longevity: unknown Max size: 130 cm TL
Age and/or size at maturity (50%)	Males: 91 cm TL Females: ~107 cm TL

**CAAB Code:** 37 024004

**Link to IUCN Page:** <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/42729/68645549>

**Link to page at Shark References:** <http://shark-references.com/species/view/Squatina-albipunctata>

### References

- Graham, K.J., Wood, B.R. and Andrew, N.L. 1997. *The 1996–97 Survey of Upper Slope Trawling Grounds between Sydney and Gabo Island (and Comparisons with the 1976–77 Survey)*. Kapala Cruise Report No. 117, NSW Fisheries, Cronulla, Australia
- Graham, K.J. 1999. Trawl fish length-weight relationships from data collected during FRV Kapala surveys. NSW Fisheries Research Report Series 2.
- Graham, K.J., Andrew, N.L. and Hodgson, K.E. 2001. Changes in the relative abundances of sharks and rays on Australian South East Fishery trawl grounds after twenty years of fishing. *Marine and Freshwater Research* 52: 549–561.
- 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*. CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood.
- Rigby, C.L., White, W.T. and Simpfendorfer, C.A. 2016. Deepwater chondrichthyan bycatch of the Eastern King Prawn Fishery in the southern Great Barrier Reef, Australia. *PLoS ONE* 11(5), e0156036.