



SMOOTHHOUND

Mustelus mustelus

A medium-sized shark with a short snout and large oval eyes. They have a third eyelid, known as a nictitating membrane, which protects their eyes while feeding.

Grey to grey brown in colour, this slender shark is usually unspotted but may occasionally have dark spots. Underneath they're white. This counter shading is common in sharks and helps to conceal them from predators, and prey, from both above and below.

They belong to a group of sharks known as the Ground Sharks (Carcharhiniformes). This is the largest and most diverse order of sharks, containing at least 291 species and 8 families.

The Smoothhound belongs to the Houndshark family (Triakidae), of which there are over 40 species.

Often confused for the Starry Smoothhound, it can be very difficult to tell these two species apart. Genetic testing is the most reliable method.

Smoothhounds are usually bottom-dwelling, swimming over sand, mud or rocks. But they may also be found

FAST FACTS

SIZE:

Matures at:

♀ ~80cm

♂ 70-74cm

Max: 164cm

DIET:

Crab, shrimp, octopus, squid & fish.

RANGE:

Eastern Atlantic

HABITAT:

Temperate coastal waters over sand, mud or rocks. Depths of 5-350m.

STATUS: **Vulnerable**

mid-water. They prefer depths of 5-50m but have been found up to 350m.

With powerful jaws and crushing teeth, they're perfectly equipped for crunching through the hard shells of crabs, lobsters and shrimp – their preferred prey.

They give birth to litters of 4-15 pups after 10-11 months. Pups are born ~39cm. Females reach sexual maturity at 12-15 years. Males at 6-9 years. They live for 25 years.

SMOOTHHOUND THREATS

Smoothhounds are widespread, but not abundant. Heavily fished in the Mediterranean, regional management is required in European and Mediterranean coastal waters.

- **FISHERIES** – Targeted throughout the Mediterranean, as their meat is valued in southern Europe. They're also taken as bycatch in mixed species trawls and longline fisheries.

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2. Sign up to our newsletter - keep up to date with all the latest news and campaign updates.
3. Join us in safeguarding the future of sharks by becoming a Shark Trust member.

Safeguarding the future of sharks - www.sharktrust.org