



SPECIES ON THE EDGE OF SURVIVAL



Spiny Dogfish



Squalus acanthias

NOT EVALUATED	DATA DEFICIENT	LEAST CONCERN	NEAR THREATENED	< VULNERABLE >	ENDANGERED	CRITICALLY ENDANGERED	EXTINCT IN THE WILD	EXTINCT
NE	DD	LC	NT	VU	EN	CR	EW	EX



© Alex Murch

The **Spiny Dogfish**, *Squalus acanthias*, is listed as 'Vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. This relatively small shark is principally found in coastal waters of the eastern and western Atlantic, the southern coasts of Australia and New Zealand, the eastern and western North Pacific, and the eastern South Pacific.

The Spiny Dogfish is targeted as a valuable commercial species and suffers high levels of mortality due to accidental by-catch in other fisheries. Although previously naturally abundant, this shark is vulnerable to overexploitation because of its late maturity, low reproductive capacity, and

long generation time. It also has the longest pregnancy of any animal. Two subpopulations in the northwest and northeast Atlantic Ocean are considered to be at particularly high risk.

Despite several decades of warnings of unsustainable fishing pressure and reported steep stock declines, very few conservation or management measures are in place for the Spiny Dogfish, while measures that are in place have been relatively ineffective. Perhaps the only exception is in New Zealand, where quotas have been introduced to limit catches to sustainable levels.



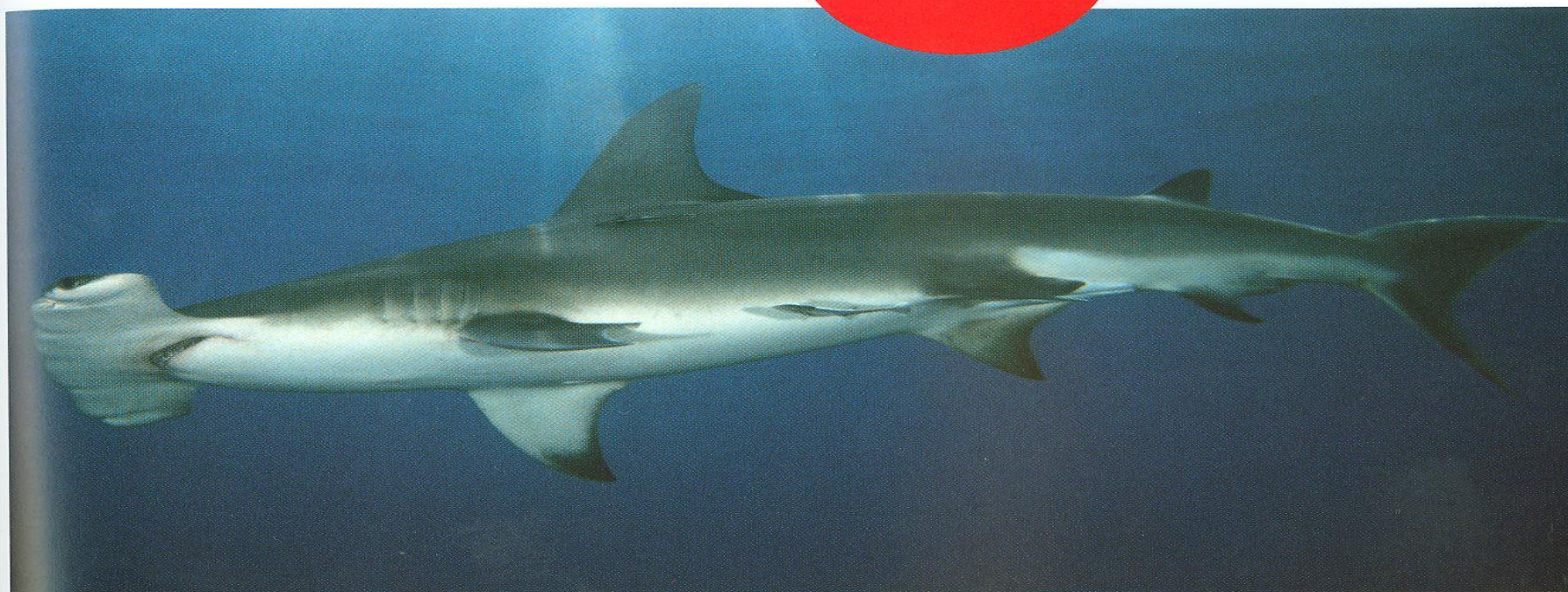
A species is Vulnerable when it faces a high risk of extinction in the wild, based on measurements of population size and/or geographic range and their trends in the past, present and/or future.

Great Hammerhead



Sphyrna mokarran

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The **Great Hammerhead**, *Sphyrna mokarran*, is listed as 'Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. This large shark ranges widely throughout the tropical waters of the world, including the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans, and many smaller seas.

The Great Hammerhead is highly prized for its fins, and suffers very high levels of incidental mortality in other fisheries for tuna and tuna-like fishes. Like most other sharks, its slow growth and low reproduction rate makes it highly vulnerable to overexploitation. As a result, it has

suffered serious declines, especially in parts of the eastern Atlantic where fishing effort is unmanaged and unmonitored.

The Great Hammerhead is in urgent need of coordinated conservation efforts involving the management of target and non-target fisheries. Fortunately, the increasing recognition of the detrimental effects of shark finning has led to the implementation of finning bans by fishing states in the United States, Australia and the European Union. Nevertheless, improved enforcement of legislation is required to prevent ongoing illegal finning activities.



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Giant Devilray

Mobula mobular

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The **Giant Devilray**, *Mobula mobular*, is listed as 'Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. This huge, plankton-feeding manta-like ray occurs in the Mediterranean and possibly also in the eastern Atlantic along the coast of northwest Africa, the Azores and the Canary Islands.

Although the Giant Devilray is not targeted specifically by fisheries, it is accidentally captured at threatening levels. Owing to high levels of by-catch and a very low reproductive capacity, this species is almost

certainly declining. A decline in habitat quality, particularly in the Mediterranean, is also possibly impacting some populations.

The banning of driftnets and of trawling below 1,000 metres throughout the Mediterranean Sea in 2005 is likely to have reduced one of the most severe threats to the Giant Devilray. One of the major priorities now is to raise conservation awareness amongst fishermen in order to maximise the number of Giant Devilrays that are disentangled and released unharmed after accidental capture.

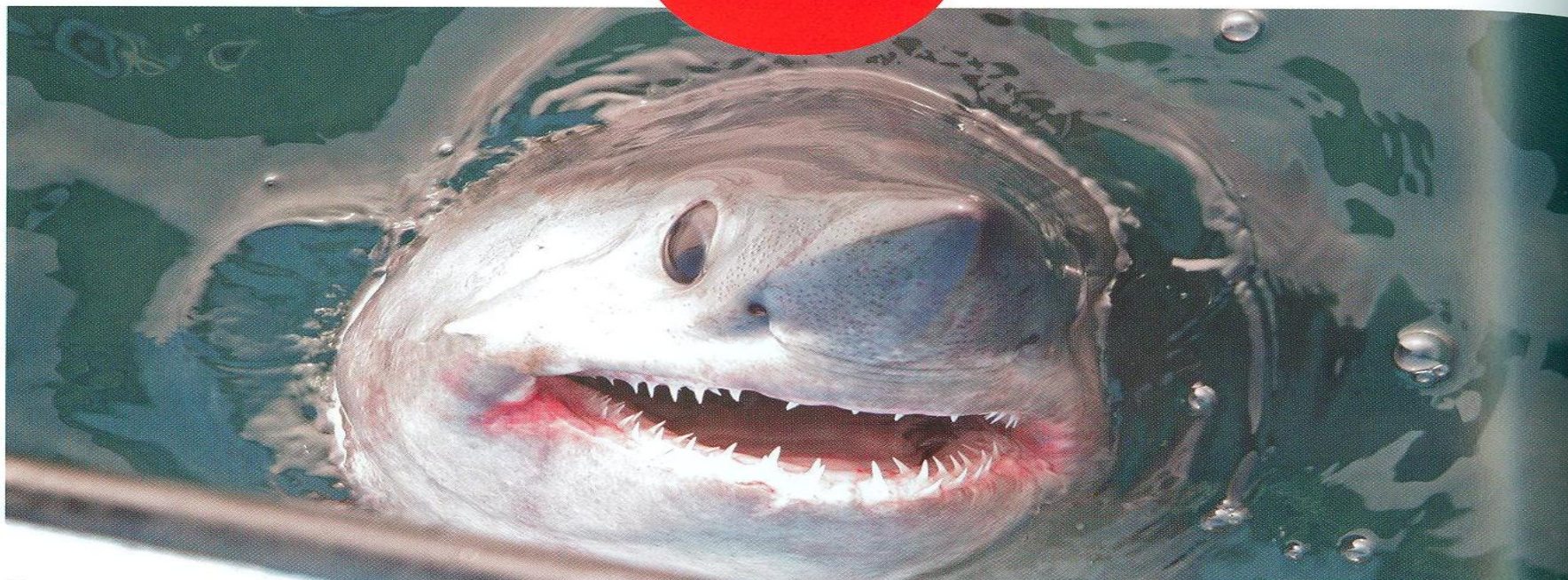


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Porbeagle

Lamna nasus

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The **Porbeagle**, *Lamna nasus*, is listed as 'Vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. It is found worldwide in temperate and cold-temperate waters. Subpopulations in the Northeast Atlantic and Mediterranean are classified as 'Critically Endangered', and that of the Northwest Atlantic as 'Endangered'.

The greatest threat to this shark is unsustainable commercial fishing. A low reproductive rate and high commercial value, both in target and incidental fisheries, make the Porbeagle highly vulnerable to overexploitation, and populations in the North Atlantic have been seriously depleted,

while those in the Mediterranean have virtually disappeared. Little information is available from the southern oceans, where its population status is unknown.

Catches of Porbeagle are regulated in the EU and New Zealand, and the species is included in fishery management plans in Canada and the USA. However, the international trade in Porbeagle meat that drives many fisheries is currently unregulated, and a proposal to list the species on Appendix II of CITES, which makes international trade without a permit illegal, was rejected earlier this year.



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Common Skate



Dipturus batis

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The **Common Skate**, *Dipturus batis*, is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. The largest European ray, growing to at least two metres in length, it is found in the northeastern Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea.

The Common Skate was once one of the most abundant rays in the northeast Atlantic and made up a large part of commercial catches. Since then, it has undergone dramatic declines, particularly around the British Isles. Caught both by fisheries targeting this species, and

as by-catch, its long lifespan and slow maturation mean the Common Skate has little ability to withstand high levels of exploitation. This is probably the most threatened marine fish in the world.

The Common Skate is not subject to any species-specific conservation measures across its range, though it would likely benefit from more general regulations prohibiting fishing in the North Sea and Mediterranean. Suitable non-trawling areas may also be needed to protect both adults and eggs from capture by trawling gear.



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© Brian Hutchinson

The **Leatherback Turtle**, *Dermochelys coriacea*, is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. It is the world's largest turtle and is found throughout every ocean (it has been recorded as far north as Alaska and as far south as the tip of South Africa).

Threats to Leatherback Turtles worldwide include loss of nesting habitat, accidental capture in fishing lines and nets, collisions with boats, egg collection for human consumption, and ingestion of discarded plastics which are often mistaken for jellyfish (their preferred diet).

Exploitation of sea turtles and their products has become illegal in most countries. Conservation programmes have been established in most of their nesting areas to protect egg clutches and nesting females from poachers. Because of the severe decline in the world's population of Leatherback Turtles, better protection of critical nesting habitat, and the reduction of incidental captures in fisheries, is essential. Furthermore, because the migratory routes of this species cross territorial waters of many nations, further international collaboration focusing on conservation will greatly enhance its chances of survival.



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Basking Shark

Cetorhinus maximus



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The **Basking Shark**, *Cetorhinus maximus*, is listed as 'Vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. It gets its name from its habit of 'basking' while surface foraging to filter out its planktonic prey. The Basking Shark is the second largest fish in the world, and is widely distributed in cool temperate waters throughout the world's coastal seas and oceans.

This species was hunted for centuries to supply liver oil for street lighting and industrial use, skin for leather, and flesh for food or fishmeal. Due to its

slow reproductive rate, this species is particularly vulnerable to overfishing, and targeted populations are quickly destroyed and are very slow to recover. Today, the biggest threat comes from the demand for fins in the Far East and from accidental by-catch in the fishing industry.

The Basking Shark is now protected in the territorial waters of several countries, and in 2002 it was accepted onto Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), which requires that international trade is monitored.



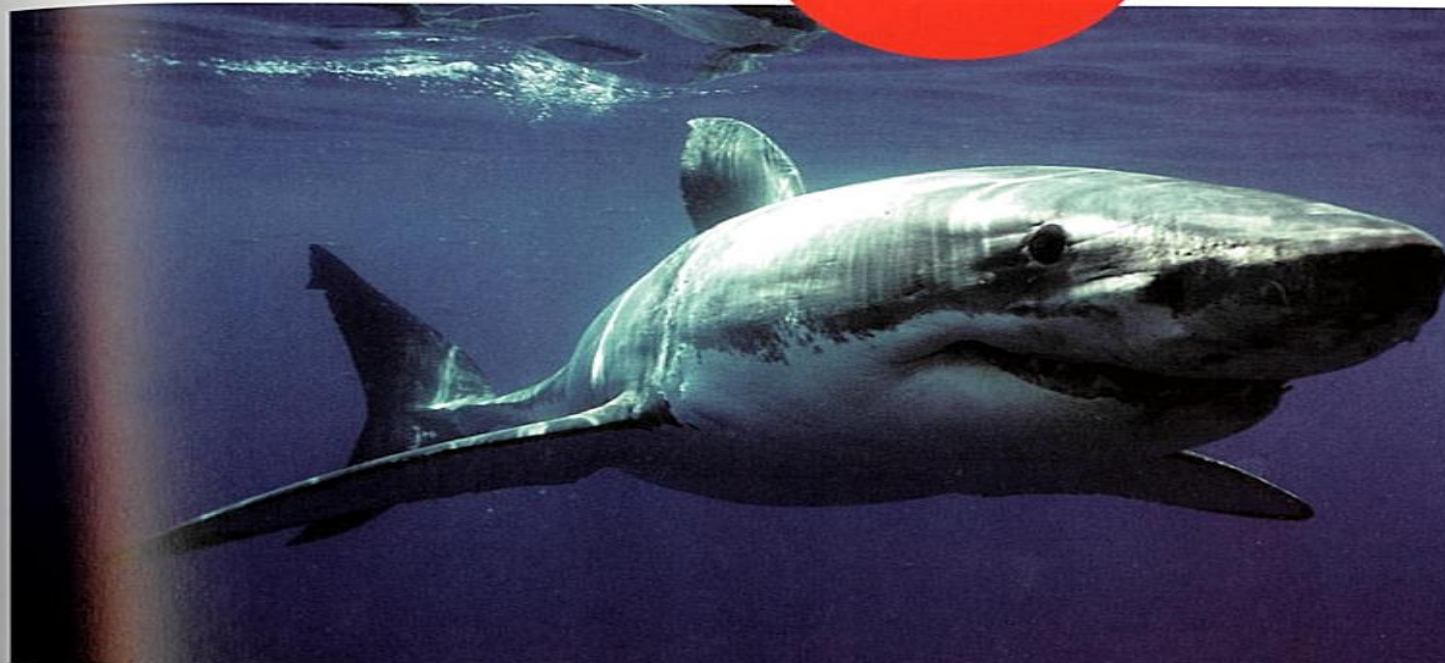
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Great White Shark



Carcharodon carcharias

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The **Great White Shark**, *Carcharodon carcharias*, is classified as 'Vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. It can be found almost anywhere in the world, with concentrations in temperate and tropical coastal seas.

The Great White Shark has long been a focus for negative media attention, generated by rare lethal interactions with humans. As a consequence, this species is directly exploited for sports fishing, commercial trophy-hunting, and both the curio and oriental shark-fin trade. Sharks are sold for their flesh, fins, skins, jaws, teeth and oil. Unfortunately, its inquisitive

nature and tendency to scavenge from fishing gear, makes this shark vulnerable to either its own accidental entrapment, or deliberate killing by commercial fishermen.

The Great White Shark is currently protected in the Australian EEZ and state waters, South Africa, Namibia, Israel, Malta, Palau and the USA. It should be removed from international game fish record lists, and receive more rational treatment by the media. The recent interest in shark dives and ecotourism may provide a substantial local income and an important method of education.



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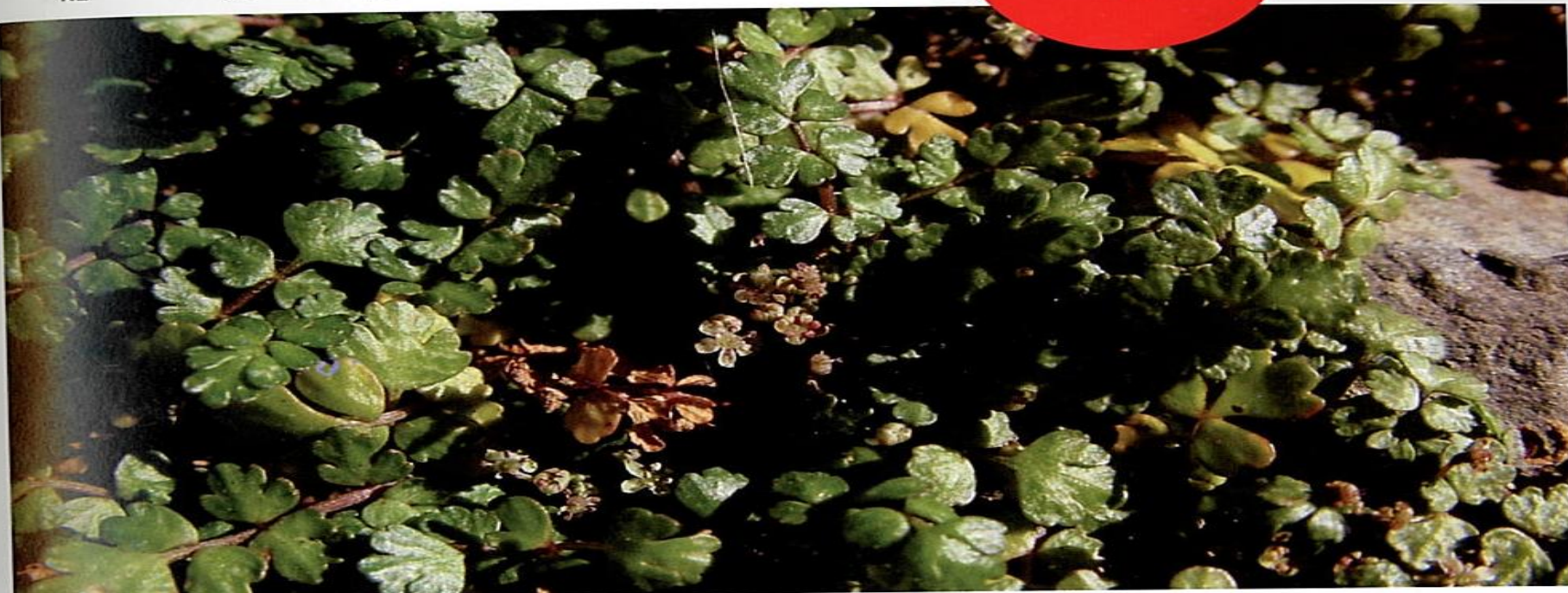
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© Juan Riera Latorre

Apium bermejoi is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. This herbaceous plant can be found creeping over the ground in temporary streambeds on the Balearic island of Menorca in the western Mediterranean Sea.

To date, there are less than 100 individuals in an area of just a few dozen square metres. Its habitat is often trampled by passing fishermen and hikers, or more seriously disrupted by offroad motorcyclists. In addition, *Apium bermejoi* must compete

with a wide variety of other plant species for essential water and nutrients. Its present decline seems to be related to a series of drier summers, showing that this species is very sensitive to climate change.

The small area that *Apium bermejoi* inhabits must be better protected. In 2008, the regional government approved a protection plan, and since then the plant has been reintroduced to three new sites. Seeds have also been collected from each individual to be stored in a seed bank. All populations are monitored at regular intervals; nevertheless,

the species continues to be under threat due to its small population size and the possible impacts of climate change.



European Eel



Anguilla anguilla

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The **European Eel**, *Anguilla anguilla*, is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. It spends most of its life in European rivers which flow into the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Baltic seas, and migrates to the western subtropical Atlantic where it breeds.

from stocked eels from Japan, which is suspected to affect the ability of these eels to reach their spawning grounds.

The International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) has recommended that a recovery plan be developed as a matter of urgency. International trade in this species is regulated by the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), and the European Council has issued a regulation requiring the development of eel management plans.

There is a huge demand in Asia and Europe for European Eels as food and, as a result, they are now being fished unsustainably. Other threats include dams, which have blocked migration routes and cause high mortality rates among migrating eels, and a parasitic nematode introduced



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Mallorcan Midwife Toad



Alytes

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The **Mallorcan Midwife Toad**, *Alytes muletensis*, is listed as 'Vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. Endemic to the island of Mallorca, this species is also named for its unusual parental care, in which the male carries the developing eggs.

The Mallorcan Midwife Toad is restricted to a mountain range in Mallorca. It has undergone a marked decline as a result of predation by the introduced Viperine Snake and competition with the Perez's Frog, another introduced species. The development of tourism and human

settlement on the island is also putting pressure on water resources, and the damming of streams is an additional threat.

As well as being protected under a range of national and international legislation, the Mallorcan Midwife Toad has been the subject of a conservation project involving captive breeding and re-introductions, with several populations already successfully established. Although worries over disease have affected this programme, a new recovery programme is being developed, and control of the Viperine Snake is also underway.



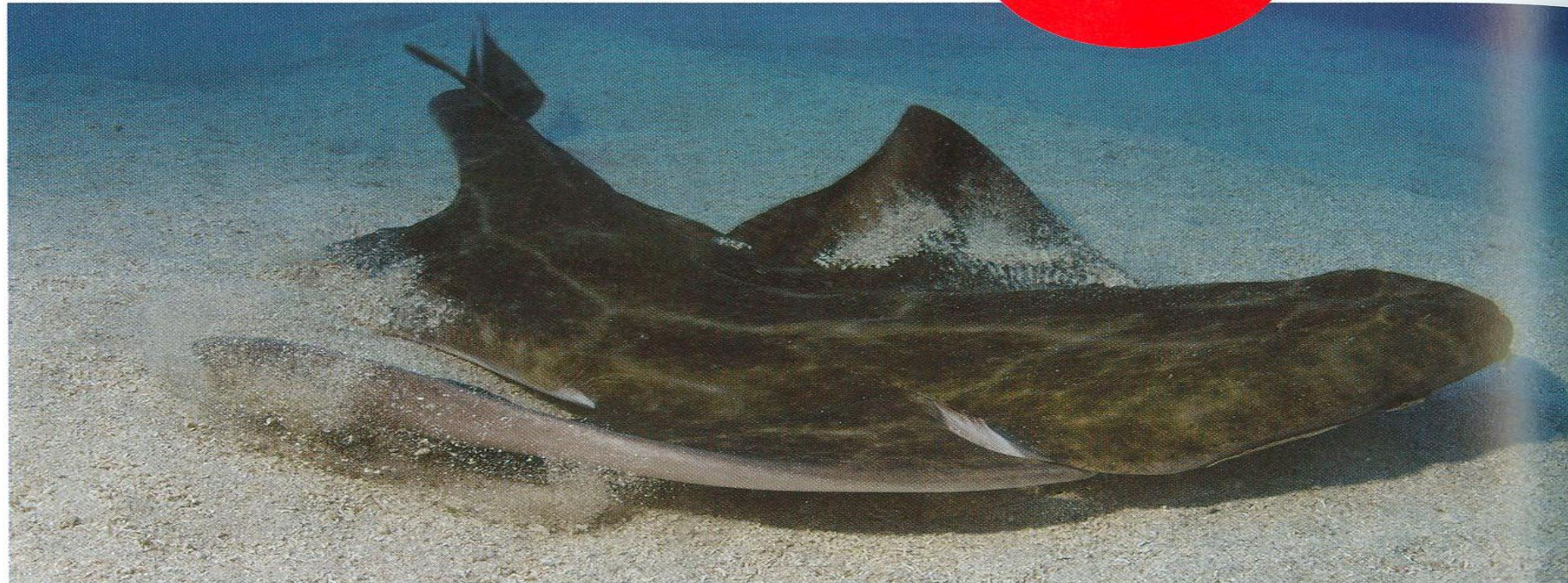
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Angel Shark



Squatina squatina

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The **Angel Shark**, *Squatina squatina*, is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. Historically, the Angel Shark's range extended from Scandinavia to northwestern Africa, including the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. However, it has now vanished from some areas, and is extremely uncommon throughout most of the remainder of its range.

Although not particularly sought after by fisheries, the Angel Shark's habit of lying on the sea bottom makes it particularly vulnerable to by-catch in trawl fisheries.

Over the last 50 years, trawling activity has increased, and as a result the population has declined dramatically, and has even been declared extinct in the North Sea.

All *Squatina* species are protected within three Balearic Islands marine reserves, where fishing for these species is forbidden. There is an urgent need to confirm the status of the Angel Shark in the southern Mediterranean, Canary Islands and other areas where populations may still persist, so that appropriate conservation measures can be implemented as soon as possible.



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