

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?



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TIGER SHARK

This species derives its name from the vertical stripes along its flanks. These stripes are very dark, almost black at birth but fade considerably with age.

This species grows to at least 5m and is a solitary predator commonly found in tropical waters. This species has very characteristic cockscomb-shaped teeth with strong serrations in both upper and lower jaws. Despite feeding on a variety of large, free-swimming prey including dolphins, sharks and sea turtles, this species is highly opportunistic and is a notorious scavenger. It is not uncommon to find a wide array of indigestible items such as tin cans, plastic, rope and jewellery in their stomachs. The most bizarre findings in KwaZulu-Natal waters are a gumboot and a workman's hardhat. Terrestrial animals that have been swept out to sea include antelope and monitor lizards have also been found in the stomachs of tiger sharks. They are distributed from the Eastern Cape (Cape St Francis is listed as the southernmost limit of its distribution) all the way to Mozambique. They are coastal and offshore in warm temperate waters. They are nomadic species, with most recapture rates being in close proximity to where they were originally tagged. The species mostly occurs to 100m depth but also dives to depths greater than 1,000m. The maximum age is estimated at 27-37 years, with age at maturity of 4-13 years. They are listed as near threatened in the IUCN Red List.



Scientific Name:	<i>Galeocerdo cuvier</i>
AKA:	Tiger Shark
Ocean Hang out:	Indian Ocean, found throughout the water column
Warm/Cool Waters:	Warm
Diet:	Anything edible and sometimes inedible
Slow/ Fast:	Slow - active but sluggish swimmer in open water and sometimes close to the bottom
S/ M/ L/ XL/ XXL:	XL
Shy/ Bold:	Bold
At the beach/ In the sea: (Inhabits coastal or oceanic waters)	At the beach - in open coastal waters and well offshore but not oceanic
Local/ International: (Endemic/ Non-native)	International in all tropical and warm temperate waters
Nomadic/ Homely: (Migratory or resident)	Nomadic
Social/ Anti-social: (Normally found in groups or solitary)	Anti-social
Black Tie/ Eccentric: (Easily recognisable as a shark or ray or has a unique appearance)	Black Tie
Teeth:	Characteristic cockscomb-shaped teeth in both jaws
Best Feature:	Their vertical dark stripes and catholic diet
Red Listing:	Near Threatened (2019)