

Record details of your eggcase (including location and photographs), via the online recording form at [www.sharktrust.org/recordyoureggcase](http://www.sharktrust.org/recordyoureggcase) or by downloading the iPhone or Android smartphone app.

Take a photograph of your eggcase, alongside a scale (e.g. ruler, tape measure or 2p coin).

Remove the eggcase from the water and use this ID guide to identify what you've found (you may also find the online step-by-step ID key helpful – find it at [www.eggcase.org](http://www.eggcase.org) or on the iPhone/Android app).

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## HOW TO IDENTIFY & RECORD:

Once washed ashore, the wind can blow them up the beach so also check the back of the beach by cliffs or sand dunes.

Look carefully amongst the seaweed in the strandline – they can be difficult to spot at first!

The best time to hunt for eggcases is often after stormy weather when lots of seaweed and debris has been thrown up on to the beach.

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## HOW TO HUNT:

## EGGCASES UNDERWATER

Eggcases can be difficult to find underwater, as they can be camouflaged with seaweed and sand or hidden in reefs, but if you do spot one while snorkelling or diving then please let us know! Underwater records help to link beach records with actual egg-laying grounds and provide important information about the type of habitat that different species lay their eggs on.



## INTERNATIONAL EGGCASES

Although the Great Eggcase Hunt identification materials are mainly for eggcases found around the British Isles, we are always keen to hear of records from further afield! Records have come in from as far as South Africa, Australia and the USA to name a few. The Shark Trust identification guide has been translated into Dutch and sister projects have been established by other organisations in France, Serbia and Ireland. The Shark Trust is collaborating with the Wildlife Conservation Society and New York Aquarium to establish the project along the East Coast of the USA.



## SKATE OR A RAY?

True skate lay eggcases, whereas true rays give birth to live young. However, many species around the British Isles have historically been misnamed with many being referred to as rays instead of skate (e.g. Blonde Rays and Thornback Rays are actually skate as they lay eggs). The Shark Trust uses these commonly known names to minimise confusion and refers to 'skates and rays' collectively.



**BE SAFE ON THE BEACH!**

Tell someone where you're going.  
Check tide times.  
Use a stick/boot to rummage in seaweed.  
Respect wildlife by following the Seashore Code and don't take live specimens home.

## THE GREAT EGGCASE HUNT



Skates/rays and some sharks reproduce by laying tough, leathery eggcases, often called mermaid's purses. Each eggcase contains one embryo which will develop over several months and eventually emerges as a perfectly-formed miniature version of the adult. Once empty, the eggcases are often dislodged and will wash ashore where they can be found on the beach among the strandline.

The Great Eggcase Hunt is a citizen science recording project which aims to discover where different species of oviparous (egg-laying) shark, skate and ray lay their eggs. Empty eggcases provide an easily accessible source of information on the broad distribution and diversity of egg-laying species and can help to identify potential egg-laying or nursery grounds.



The project has evolved into one of the UK's most popular marine recording projects – it's easily accessible, requires little equipment, has a simple protocol, benefits conservation efforts and of course, *it's fun!*

**SHARK TRUST**

**THE SHARK TRUST**

The Shark Trust is the UK registered charity working to advance the worldwide conservation of sharks, skates and rays through science, education, influence and action. The Trust is an effective and well respected advocate for shark management and protection, undertaking a range of projects, campaigns and policy work to ensure the survival of these vulnerable species.

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**DOWNLOAD THE APP!**

The Great Eggcase Hunt iPhone and Android app is now available. Use the ID Tool to discover which species you've found, submit your records along with photos and keep track of all your finds!

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google play

Funded by:

**save our seas foundation**

Save Our Seas Foundation (SOSF) is an international conservation organisation committed to protecting our oceans by funding research, conservation and education projects worldwide, focusing primarily on charismatic threatened wildlife and their habitats [www.saveourseas.com](http://www.saveourseas.com).

**JOIN THE GREAT EGGCASE HUNT!**

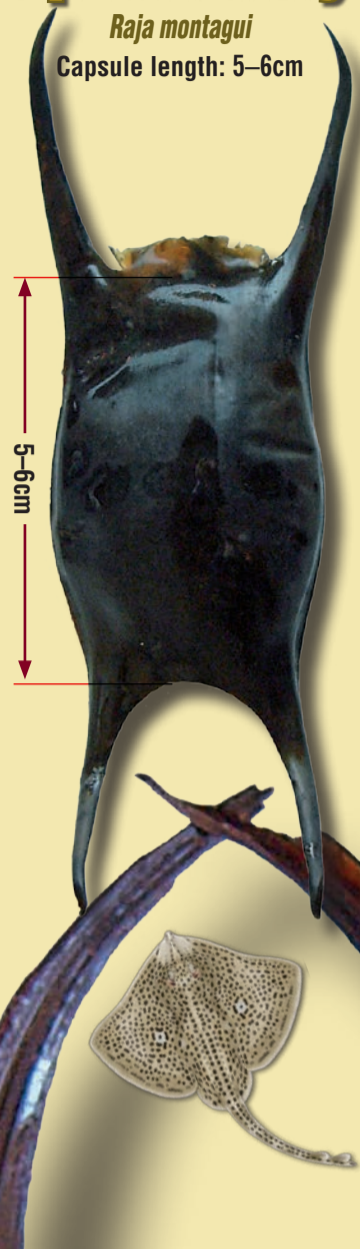
**SHARK TRUST**

**Identification Guide**

## Spotted Ray

*Raja montagui*  
 Capsule length: 5–6cm

5-6cm



## Small-eyed Ray

*Raja microocellata*  
 Capsule length: 7–8cm



## Thornback Ray

*Raja clavata*  
 Capsule length: 6–7cm



## Undulate Ray

*Raja undulata*  
 Capsule length: 7–8cm  
 Range limited to south/southwest England.



## Blonde Ray

*Raja brachyura*  
 Capsule length: 10–12cm



## Cuckoo Ray

*Leucoraja naevus*  
 Capsule length: 5–6cm



## White Skate

*Rostroraja alba*  
 Capsule length: 13–15cm  
 Limited range

## Flapper Skate

*Dipturus cf. intermedia*  
 Capsule length: 15–20cm  
 Previously known as Common Skate.  
 Limited range.

## Blue Skate

*Dipturus cf. flossada*  
 Capsule length: 13–15cm  
 Eggcase not yet recorded to the Great Eggcase Hunt.

## Starry Skate

*Amblyraja radiata*  
 Capsule length: 3.5–4.5cm

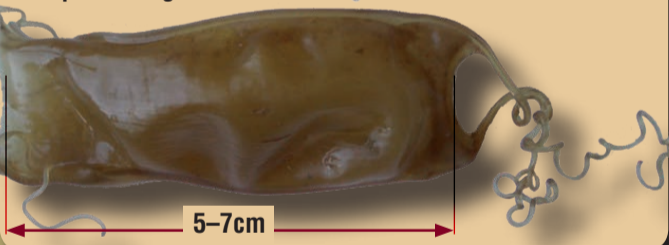


## Catsharks

You may know these species as dogfish, but they are in truth catsharks, as true dogfish give birth to live young.

## Smallspotted

*Scyliorhinus canicula*  
 Capsule length: 5–7cm



## Blackmouth

*Galeus melanostomus*  
 Capsule length: 4.5–6.5cm  
 Deepwater species, eggcase rarely washed up.



## Nursehound

*Scyliorhinus stellaris*  
 Capsule length: 8–10cm

