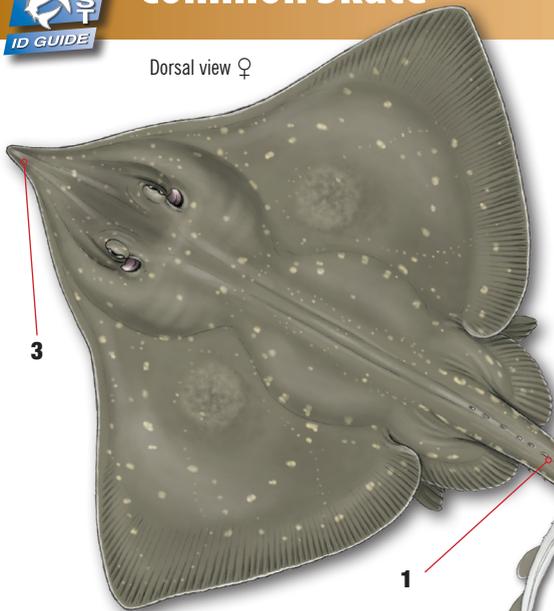
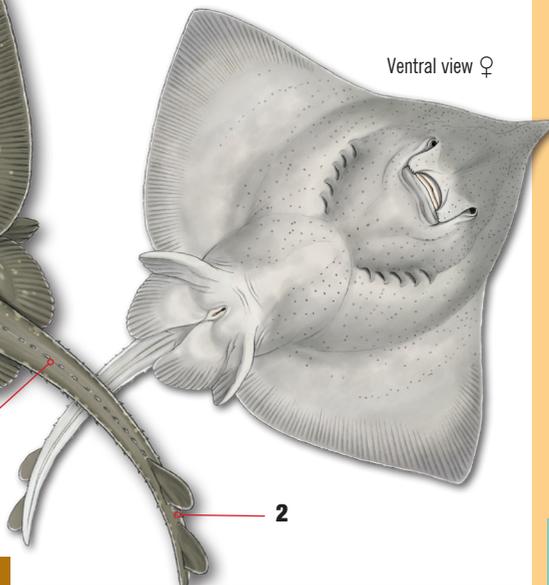


Dorsal view ♀



Ventral view ♀



1

2

3

## SCIENTIFIC NAME

*Dipturus batis* (Linnaeus, 1758).

## DISTRIBUTION

Formerly widespread in European seas. Range reduced to northwest Scotland, Celtic Sea, northern North Sea and rarely the western Mediterranean Sea<sup>iii</sup>.



## COMMON NAME

**COMMON SKATE**, Blue Skate, Grey Skate, Flapper Skate, Glattoche (De), Pocheteau Gris (Fr), Razza Bavosa (It), Raia Oirega (Pr), Noriega (Es), Vleet (Ne).

## IDENTIFICATION

- 1 Row of 12–18 thorns on tail.
- 2 1–2 thorns between dorsal fins.
- 3 Long, pointed snout<sup>i</sup>.

## COLOUR

- Dorsal surface olive grey/brown.
- Variable pattern of light spots and dark blotches.
- Ventral surface black in juveniles, grey in adults<sup>v</sup>.

## BIOLOGY AND SIZE

- Born: 21<sup>ii</sup>–29cm<sup>i</sup>. Mature: ~150cm<sup>iii</sup>. Max TL: 285cm<sup>v</sup>.
- Feed on a variety of crustaceans, teleosts and other skates<sup>v</sup>.
- Longevity of 20–100 years<sup>v</sup>.

## SIMILAR SPECIES

- *Dipturus nidarosiensis*, **Black Skate**
- *Dipturus oxyrinchus*, **Long-nosed Skate**
- *Rostroraja alba*, **White Skate**

## HABITAT

- Demersal from coastal waters to 600m. Most common ~200m<sup>iii</sup>.
- Unlike many skate, it is active both day and night<sup>v</sup>.
- Prefer soft substrates but can be found over gravel and rock beds<sup>iii</sup>.

## CONSERVATION STATUS

- Large size, late maturity and low fecundity combine to make Common Skate extremely vulnerable to fishing pressure<sup>viii</sup>.
- **Red List status:** Critically Endangered (2006).

## COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE

- 2009 – Prohibition on commercial fishers retaining this species in ICES areas IIa, IIIa, IV, VI, VII, VIII & IX.
- Extremely popular with recreational anglers, catch-and-release fisheries are a sustainable source of income where it is common<sup>vii</sup>.
- Rod and line caught fish are regularly tagged to monitor populations<sup>vii</sup>.

## HANDLING AND THORN ARRANGEMENT

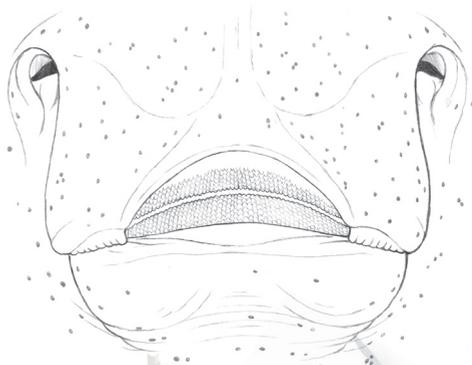
- Handle with care.
- Large, powerful skate.
- Strong row of thorns on midline.
- Thorns between dorsal fins.

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- Clark, R. S.; 1922. *JMBA* Vol. XI (4): 577–643.
- Clark, R. S.; 1926. Fishery Board for Scotland.
- Dulvy, N. K *et al*; 2006. IUCN Red List.
- Luna, S. M.; 2009. Fishbase.
- Neal, K. J. *et al*; 2008. Marine Biological Association.
- Shark Trust; 2008.
- The Scottish Angling Homepage; 2005.
- UK Biodiversity Action Plan; 1999.

## TEETH

- 40–56 rows of teeth<sup>iv</sup>.



## EGGCASE



- 1 Very large, 120–180mm in length (excluding horns).
- 2 Distinct lateral keels.
- 3 Very deep proximal fields<sup>vi</sup>.

Similar eggcase to the Long-nosed Skate, *Dipturus oxyrinchus*.  
(NB Shown at half size in comparison to an adult's hand.)