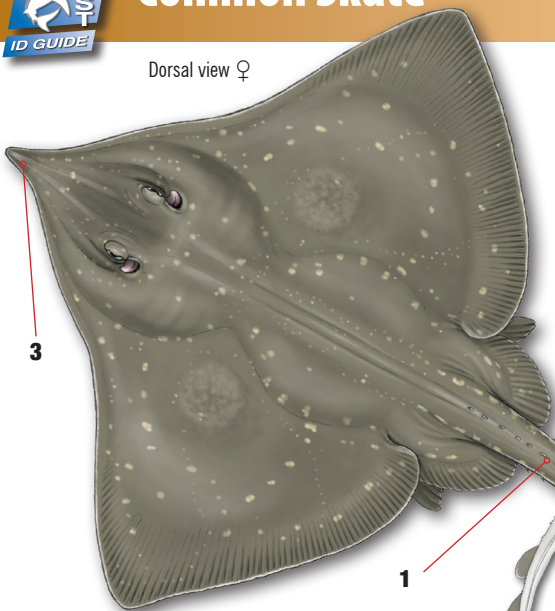
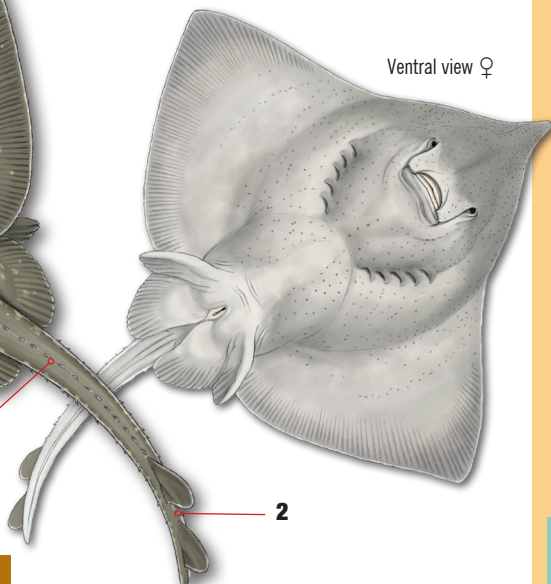


Dorsal view ♀



Ventral view ♀

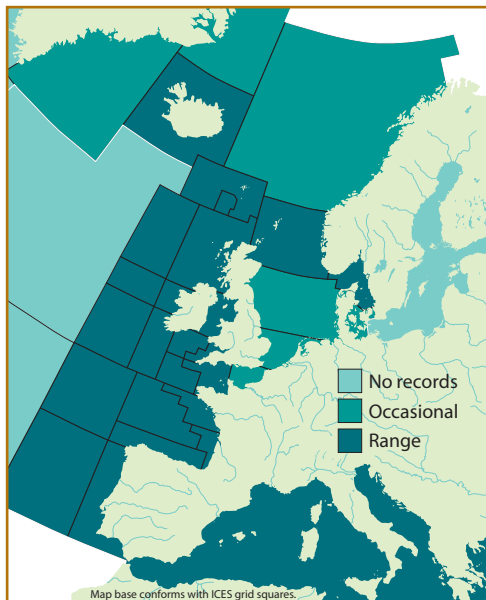


SCIENTIFIC NAME

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 Seaⁱⁱⁱ.



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^v.

COLOUR

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

BIOLOGY AND SIZE

- Born: 21ⁱⁱⁱ–29cmⁱ. Mature: ~150cmⁱⁱⁱ. Max TL: 285cm^v.
- Feed on a variety of crustaceans, teleosts and other skates^v.
- Longevity of 20–100 years^v.

SIMILAR SPECIES

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

HABITAT

- Demersal from coastal waters to 600m. Most common ~200mⁱⁱⁱ.
- Unlike many skate, it is active both day and night^{iv}.
- Prefer soft substrates but can be found over gravel and rock bedsⁱⁱⁱ.

CONSERVATION STATUS

- Large size, late maturity and low fecundity combine to make Common Skate extremely vulnerable to fishing pressure^{viii}.
- **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^{vii}.
- Rod and line caught fish are regularly tagged to monitor populations^{vii}.

HANDLING AND THORN ARRANGEMENT

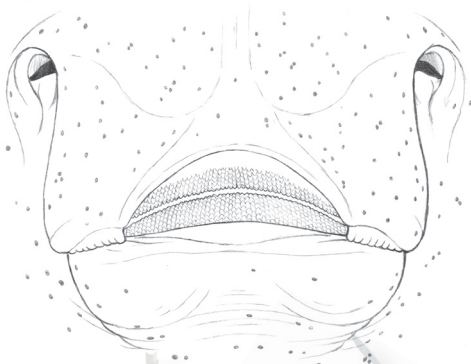
- Handle with care.
- Large, powerful skate.
- Strong row of thorns on midline.
- Thorns between dorsal fins.

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- The Scottish Angling Homepage; 2005.
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TEETH

- 40–56 rows of teeth^{iv}.



EGGCASE



- 1 Very large, 120–180mm in length (excluding horns).
- 2 Distinct lateral keels.
- 3 Very deep proximal fields^{vi}.

Similar eggcase to the Long-nosed Skate, *Dipturus oxyrinchus*.

(NB Shown at half size in comparison to an adult's hand.)