

Lateral view ♀

Anterior view
of head

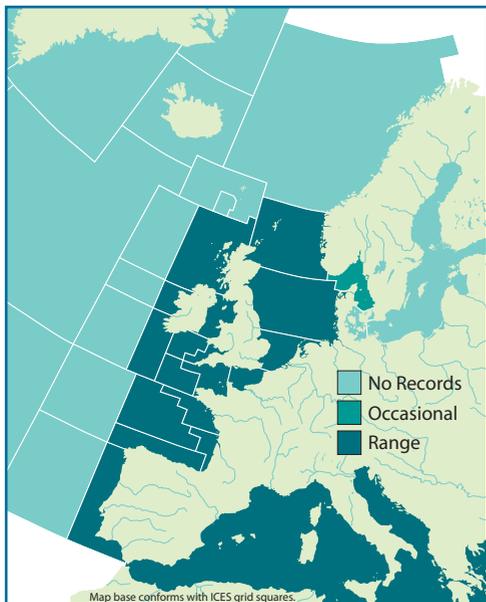
Ventral view ♀

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Scyliorhinus stellaris (Linnaeus, 1758).

DISTRIBUTION

Northeast Atlantic from southern Scandinavia and the British Isles to Morocco, including the Mediterranean Sea. Possibly tropical west Africa.



COMMON NAME

NURSEHOUND, Bull Huss, Greaterspotted Catshark, Greater Spotted Dogfish, Flake, Rigg, Grande Roussette (Fr), Alitán (Es).

IDENTIFICATION

- 1 Nasal furrows do not reach mouth.
- 2 No dorsal spines.
- 3 Anal fin present.

COLOUR

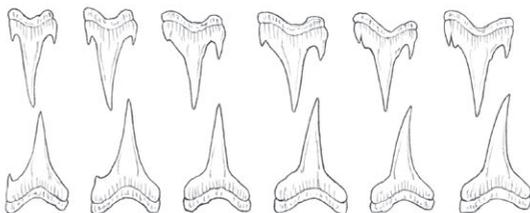
- Creamy brown dorsally.
- Numerous large and small dark spots.
- Sometimes white spots.
- White ventrally¹.

BIOLOGY AND SIZE

- Born: 16cm. Max TL: 162cm¹.
- Oviparous, incubation periods of 9–11 months have been recordedⁱⁱⁱ.
- Cephalopods dominate diet. Crustaceans, molluscs and fish are also important¹.

TEETH

- 44–56 teeth in the upper jaw including 0–2 symphyseal teeth.
- 38–46 teeth in the lower jaw including 2–4 symphyseal teeth.
- Front teeth single cusped and erect.
- Develop cusplets further back in the jaw^{iv}.



SIMILAR SPECIES



- Scyliorhinus stellaris*, Nursehound



- Scyliorhinus canicula*, Smallspotted Catshark



- Galeus melastomus*, Blackmouth Catshark



- Galeus murinus*, Mouse Catshark



- Galeus atlanticus*, Atlantic Sawtail Catshark

HABITAT

- From intertidal to 12m, most common 20–63m.
- Has a preference for rough/rocky areas or areas with heavy algal coverⁱ.
- Can be locally abundant, although not to the same extent as Smallspotted Catshark, *Scyliorhinus canicula*ⁱⁱ.

CONSERVATION STATUS

- While it can be locally abundant, limited interconnectivity between populations and relatively low fecundity may make it vulnerable to overexploitation. Declines have been recorded in the northern Mediterraneanⁱⁱ.
- Red List status:** Near Threatened (2008).

COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE

- Bycatch species in the Atlantic in bottom trawls, gill nets, bottom set long lines, handlines, fixed bottom nets and occasionally pelagic trawls.
- Targeted in the Mediterranean Sea where its flesh is utilised for human consumption.
- Usually discarded in northern Europe, although post discard survival rates may be highⁱⁱⁱ.

HANDLING

- Handle with care.
- Sharp teeth.
- Abrasive skin.

EGGCASE

- 90mm long (excluding horns).
- 30m wide.
- Long tendrils from each cornerⁱ.
- Similar eggcase to the Smallspotted Catshark, *Scyliorhinus canicula*.

REFERENCES

- Compagno, L. J. V.; 1984. *FAO*.
- Ellis, J. *et al*; 2008. *IUCN Red List*.
- Orton, J. H.; 1926. *Nature*.
- Soldo, A. *et al*; 2000. *Sci. Mar.*

